



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

FOI Reference number: FOI 55/2015

Date: 29 October 2015

Request:

1. *How many currently serving Police Officers within the PSNI are presently on no pay whilst awaiting the outcome of an appeal in respect of Ill health and / or Injury on duty retirement?*
2. *After the first assessment interview with SMP (Blackwell Associates). What is the average time taken for them to make a decision and inform Human Resources of same.*
3. *If SMP (Blackwell Associates) decline to issue a certificate in relation to an Ill health and / or injury on duty retirement application and further evidence is forwarded to them as per legislation. What is the average time taken for them to make a decision on this new information and inform Human Resources of same.*
4. *Serving members of the PSNI going through the retirement process above are to be treated as a "Priority". What form does this prioritization take and are there any specific timelines which must be referred to?*

Answer

1. The Policing Board does not hold this information, as police officer pay and sickness absence are matters for the Chief Constable. You should direct your request to PSNI FOI team (FOI@psni.pnn.police.uk).
2. Blackwell Associates were appointed to act as the Board's Selected Medical Practitioner (SMP) in April 2011. Since that time our records show the average time taken between the SMP appointment date and receipt of their report/certificate for all cases processed is 33.75 days. This includes both serving and former officer cases.
3. It is not possible to provide an average time taken as requested given that in all cases the SMP will produce a certificate in line with Regulation 29(5) of the PSNI and PSNI Reserve (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006.

4. The prioritisation given to serving officer cases relates to the order in which a case is processed by the Board's caseworkers. On receipt of a referral for a serving officer from PSNI the caseworker will deal with that case before any case relating to a former officer. On referral to the SMP they are asked to prioritise the serving officer cases by providing an appointment date to these cases before allocating an appointment date to former officer cases.

All cases referred to the SMP by the Policing Board as a fully worked up file, have a target turnaround of 6 weeks. This means that from the date the SMP receives the case referral to the date the Policing Board receive a completed report and certificate, will be a 6 week period. Exceptions to this could occur where the SMP has requested additional GP/Specialist report(s) not included in the case referral supplied by the Policing Board. Other exceptions may be where 'home visits' or medical assessments at other facilities have to be arranged or additional points of clarification are raised. If additional information is required, the target turnaround time is 12 weeks for completion.

If you have queries about this request or the decision, please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should write to the Board's Chief Executive at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG

Email: foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:-

The Information Commissioner's Office – Northern Ireland
3rd Floor
12 Cromac Place
Gasworks
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB.

Telephone: - 0303 1231114
Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that all Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information will be released into the public domain via our website @ www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.