



Disclosure ref: 14 Sent: 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

***Information about the cases which have been halted due to the defendant committing suicide before the start of the trial***

### Request

***I would like to request the following information relating to the number of cases which have failed to make it to court due to the defendant committing suicide ahead of the start trial date.***

***Specifically, the defendant would have been charged with assault by beating and the CPS to have decided to prosecute. I am looking for information between January 2019 to January 2020.***

### Response

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not hold a central record of data categorising offences that have been referred where the CPS made the decision to charge. In order to ascertain the information described in your request, a manual review would be required to identify any cases where the defendant had died and the cause of death was suicide.

As an indication of the work this would involve, the number of common assault (assault by beating) was made in respect of 52,656 offences equating to 37,648 cases during the period January 2019 to December 2019.

Section 12(1) of the FOI Act means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for central government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We believe that the cost of reviewing 37,648 cases would exceed the appropriate limit. Consequently, we are not obliged to comply with this part of your request.

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we have an obligation to advise what, if any, information may assist you with your request; the CPS holds data on the number of defendants with an outcome of 'Death of Defendant' and a Principal Offence Category of 'Offences against the Person' where the CPS made the



decision to charge. If you would like this information please submit a further request and we can take this forward subject to any FOI exemptions that may apply.

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