



Department of
Justice
An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Máinnystrie O tha Laa
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10 May 2024

REFERENCE: FOI\24\39

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST - INDEPENDENT MEDICAL REFEREES
GUIDANCE AND TRAINING MATERIALS 2017 TO 2023**

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your request for information received by the Department of Justice on the 30 March 2024, detailed below: -

Request

Please could I have the following documents relating to the Independent Medical Referees (IMRs) in the Ill Health retirement process between the years of 2017 - 2023:

- 1 All training/instructional materials supplied to or by the IMRs during the above time period.
- 2 All guidance documents supplied to or used by the IMRs during the above time period.

I note that there is two documents circulating on line relating to this part of the request. One documents is dated 2016 (Version 2) and the second is dated 2017 (version 3). The 2017 document has been updated with additional information and contains the terms as follows "This is the second version of this guidance and it is a living document which will be updated on a regular basis to reflect the legislation, policies, procedures and guidance. A copy of this guidance will be published on the NIPB's website."

The 2017 document is not published on the NIPB or the Department of Justice website. There is no mention of a number of recent judicial reviews in the current guidance document so therefore I am requesting the most up to date guidance document used by the Department of Justice Northern Ireland and the IMRs.

This response addresses your questions:

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access when you write to us asking for information. You have the right to know whether we hold recorded information falling in scope of your request, and you have the right to receive this recorded information subject to cost limit or exemption.

Freedom of Information is a request for recorded data that the Department of Justice holds.

Please could I have the following documents relating to the Independent Medical Referees (IMRs) in the Ill Health retirement process between the years of 2017 - 2023:

1 All training/instructional materials supplied to or by the IMRs during the above time period?

Please find attached the following training / instructional documents used or supplied to Independent Medical Referees (IMRs) during the period 2017 – 2023: -

(a) Joint Guidance for Medical Practitioners on Injury on Duty Awards (Version 2) (Annex A).

In addition IMRs are provided with a copy of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Police Service of Northern Ireland Reserve (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006 which can be found [here](#).

2 All guidance documents supplied to or used by the IMRs during the above time period?

You have also noted '... that there is two documents circulating on line relating to this part of the request. One documents is dated 2016 (Version 2) and the second is dated 2017 (version 3). The 2017 document has been updated with additional information and contains the terms as follows "This is the second version of this guidance and it is a living document which will be updated on a regular basis to reflect the legislation, policies, procedures and guidance. A copy of this guidance will be published on the NIPB's website."

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therefore I am requesting the most up to date guidance document used by the Department of Justice Northern Ireland and the IMRs.

The 'Joint Guidance for Medical Practitioners on Injury on Duty Awards (Version 2)' was and remains the current document in use and supplied to IMRs. This was the document used during the period 2017 to 2023.

The 2017 version 3 document referred to was not used nor published.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request an internal review, please do so in writing stating the reasons to the address above.

If following an internal review, you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask the Commissioner to investigate whether the DOJ has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out.

Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Records & Information Manager