

# An Garda Síochána

Oifig Saorála Fáisnéise,  
An Garda Síochána, Teach áth Luimnigh,  
Lárionad Gnó Udáras Forbartha Tionscail,  
Baile Sheáin, An Uaimh,  
Contae na Mí.  
C15 ND62



Freedom of Information Office,  
An Garda Síochána, Athlumney House,  
IDA Business Park,  
Johnstown, Navan,  
Co Meath.  
C15 ND62

Teileafón/Tel: (046) 9036350

Láithreán Gréasain/Website:

[www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)



Ríomh-phoist:/Email: [foi@garda.ie](mailto:foi@garda.ie)

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## Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000378-2020 Request Part Granted

*Dear*

I refer to your request, dated 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 and received on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act) for records held by An Garda Síochána.

Part 1(n) of Schedule 1 of the FOI Act states that An Garda Síochána is listed as a partially included agency "insofar as it relates to administrative records relating to human resources, or finance or procurement matters". Therefore, only administrative records that relate to human resources, finance or procurement shall be considered.

Your request sought:

*Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 I am seeking the following information*

*The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental health issues in 2019.*

*The total number of sick days taken by gardaí due to mental health issues in 2019.*

*The number of gardaí granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health in 2019.*

*The number of gardaí referred for medical care eg. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues in 2019 and the type of care they were referred for.*

*The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental health issues to this date in 2020.*

*The number of gardai who have taken sick days due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.*

*The total number of sick days taken by gardai due to mental health issues to this date to this date in 2020.*

*The total number of sick days taken by gardai due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.*

*The number of gardai granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health to this date in 2020.*

*The number of gardai referred for medical care eg. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues to this date in 2020 and the type of care they were referred for.*

*Please break these figures down by month. Eg. In January 2019, 3 gardai took sick leave as a result of mental ill health resulting in 20 sick days being taken by gardai in January 2019 as a result of mental ill health.*

I wish to inform you that I have decided to part-grant your request on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

### **1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision**

Upon receipt, your request was forwarded to the relevant sections of An Garda Síochána and a number of records have been provided to this Office. I have numbered your queries for ease of reference.

Having reviewed the records provided, I am granting your request for the records sought in questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10. The details sought by you in questions 1, 2, 5 and 7 are listed hereunder:

	No. of Gardai absent due to Mental Health Issues 2019	No. of days absent due to Mental Health Issues 2019	No. of Gardai absent due to Mental Health Issues 2020	No. of days absent due to Mental Health Issues 2020
January	10	250	18	419
February	6	168	15	387
March	8	248	18	473.5
April	9	270	18	463
May	13	325	13	329
June	12	267	16	383



July	10	265	14	334
August	12	285	10	293
September	11	285	13	354
October	15	338	N/A	N/A
November	13	322	N/A	N/A
December	16	414	N/A	N/A

In respect of questions 3 and 9, seeking the “*number of gardaí granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health*”, the following table is a breakdown on the numbers of Gardai who were medically discharged in the years 2019 and 2020\*(includes 3 applications awaiting the Commissioner approval for medical discharge date).

Reason for Discharge	2019	2020
Infirmity of the Body	3	2
Infirmity of the Mind	4	3
Clinical Infirmity	3	3

Questions 4 and 10 sought the “*number of gardaí referred for medical care eg. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues*”. I am advised that 216 Garda personnel were referred for psychological assessment/opinion by the Garda Occupational Health Service in 2019. The number of Garda personnel referred for psychological assessment/opinion by the Garda Occupational Health Service as of 30/09/2020 stands at 173 personnel

Questions 6 and 8 of your request sought “*The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020*” and “*The total number of sick days taken by gardaí due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.*” I have been advised that the Sick Absences Management System (SAMS) does not have the facility to capture numbers of members who have availed of sick leave due to mental ill-health specifically as a result of Covid-19. Therefore I am refusing this aspect of your request on the basis of Section 15(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

***Refusal on administrative grounds to grant FOI requests***

*15(1)(a) the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken*

Since June 2016, a 24/7, 365 Independent Helpline and Counselling Service is available to all staff within An Garda Síochána. This service is available for both work and personal difficulties. Over 1433 staff members of An Garda Síochána have accessed face to face Counselling service since its fruition. The service is not mandatory and is self-referral. It is provided by Inspire Wellbeing (formally EAO Consultants / Care call). Each member of the Organisation may avail of six (6) free sessions of counselling per year, an additional two (2) will be provided if clinically approved. All appointments and consultants are arranged directly between the Service Provider and the staff member.

Should a member present to this service with a mental health emergency, they will be automatically referred to a general practitioner or accident and emergency department of a nearby hospital for treatment.

In conjunction with the aforementioned service, the Garda Employee Assistance Service (GEAS) is available to provide a confidential, professional, support and assistance service to:-

- Serving members of An Garda Síochána and their families.
- Garda Trainees and Probationers
- Retired members of An Garda Síochána and their families.
- Reserve Gardaí
- Retired Members of External Police Service resident in the State.

The service is available to help resolve work and/or personal issues that are causing stress, worry or disruption to an individual's life.

## **2. Right of Appeal**

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you may seek an Internal Review of the matter by writing to the address below and quoting reference number **FOI-000378-2020**.

**Freedom of Information Office, An Garda Síochána, Athlumney House, IDA Business Park, Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath, C15 ND62**

Please note that a fee applies. This fee has been set at €30 (€10 for a Medical Card holder). Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque, and made payable to Accountant, Garda Finance Directorate, Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

Payment can be made by electronic means, using the following details:

**Account Name:** An Garda Síochána Imprest Account

**Account Number:** 30000302

**Sort Code:** 951599

**IBAN:** IE28DABA95159930000302

**BIC:** DABAIE2D

**You must ensure that your FOI reference number (FOI-000378-2020) is included in the payment details.**


You should submit your request for an Internal Review within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. The review will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of An Garda Síochána and the decision will be communicated to you within 3 weeks. The making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

Please be advised that An Garda Síochána replies under Freedom of Information may be released in to the public domain via our website at [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

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

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Office by telephone at (046) 9036350.

Yours sincerely,

  
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ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
PAUL BASSETT  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER

13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020.