



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: FOI-2021-00024

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: COVID-19 - Fixed Penalty Notices issued

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Request

The number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued by your force under Coronavirus regulations between 27 March 2020 and 31 December 2020, broken down by ethnicity AND offence.

Answer

PSNI consider the information requested to be identifiable and therefore we have made the decision to provide the responses in uncorrelated tables.

Table 1 provides the total number of Fixed Penalty Notices ('FRN's') for breach of Coronavirus regulations from 30th March 2020 – 31st December 2020 broken down by ethnicity and the total number of FRN's issued.

Offence	Number of FRN's issued
White	2702
Irish Traveller	9
Indian	5
Pakistani	2
Other Asian	3
Black African	22
Black Other	30
Chinese	4
Other Ethnic Group	22
Mixed	7
Roma	15
Not recorded	922

Please note that the Police Service of Northern Ireland ('PSNI') rely on recipients of Covid Penalty Notices providing ethnicity voluntarily. It is also the case that this data may be affected by information

regarding the recipient's ethnicity on police systems. This is possible if the persons information is recorded from a separate incident both prior to, or after the incident where a penalty notice has been issued.

Table 2 provides the total number of FRN's broken down by each offence:

Offence	Total Number of FRN's issued
£60 (COV 1)	1917
£120 (COV 1)	98
£240 (COV 1)	14
£480 (COV 1)	3
£960 (COV 1)	1
£1000 (COV 3)	49
£200 (COV 4)	1623
£1000 (COV 5)	35
£2000 (COV 5)	2
£4000 (COV 5)	0
£10000 (COV 5)	0
£200 (COV 6)	1

To provide additional assist in conjunction with the responses we have provided below an explanation for each of the penalties:

New Offences and New Fixed Penalty Notices - With effect from 17:30 on 12th November, 2020, COV1 fines are no longer issued. COV4 will replace COV1. This is because penalty levels have increased and additional offences have been introduced.

COV2 and COV3 will continue to be used as normal.

COV5 can now be issued to a business and/or premises as required for breach of the regulations, starting at £1,000 to a maximum of £10,000.

CRN: Community Resolution Notice (no fine, just a warning)

COV1: Cov1 penalty notices may only be given to persons 18 years and over and can be issued for a number of reasons including for example; indoor or outdoor gatherings breaching the allowed maximum number of people. These are now replaced by COV4 fines.

COV2: Cov2 in effect amounts to a 'warning' for the purposes of stopping a person from continuing to breach the regulations and are broken into two types:

- COV2 Prohibition Notice are issued to commercial premises so can be given to a shop, hotel, licensed premises.
- COV2 Prohibition Notices are issued for Restriction of Gatherings in a private dwelling

COV3: Cov3 is a Failure to isolate (£1,000 fine)

COV4: With effect from 17:30 on 12th November, 2020, COV1 fines are no longer issued. COV4 will replace COV1. This is because penalty levels have increased and additional offences have been introduced. Fines now start at £200.

COV5: COV5 fines can now be issued to a business and/or premises as required for breach of the

regulations, starting at £1,000 to a maximum of £10,000.

These can be issued to a business or premises for a number of offences including but not exclusive to not closing a business and/or premises as required, breaching the early closing requirements for hospitality and/or related contravention, not implementing measures to maintain social distancing and/or related contravention or organising, operating or participating in a large gathering/unlicensed music event.

The management of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 is a matter for UK Border Force and their associated partners. The role of police is to respond to reports from the UK Border Force, or any of their associated partners, of potential breaches, however, police will also act on any significant concerns raised by members of the public.

Prohibition Notice: If a business, service provider or premises is identified as having breached Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020, they may be issued with a Prohibition Notice, which is a public safety measure. Each situation is assessed on its own merits and the circumstances of the breach/breaches taken into consideration. Where appropriate, and steps can be taken to immediately remedy the breach/breaches, a Prohibition Notice may not be necessary. When a Prohibition Notice is served, the business, service provider or premises must immediately cease the activities giving rise to a breach of the regulations and take steps to remedy the breach/breaches. When appropriate steps have been taken to remedy the breach/breaches, the premises can re-open and resume trading within the Regulations. There is no associated financial penalty issued with a Prohibition Notice. However, should a premises breach a Prohibition Notice there is a potential financial penalty of up to £5,000, upon conviction. A prohibition notice served on licensed premises will remain in place until police are satisfied that the establishment conforms with the Regulations and is safe to re-open.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Corporate Information Branch, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psnipolice.uk

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