

Templates

Section 12 Refusal

Exceeds time limit

[ICO Guidance Section 12](#)

Information withheld information request on cost grounds.

Key points

- Requires no test of the public interest to be undertaken, although in applying them you must ensure that you have read the relevant guidance and the request matches any qualifying criteria.
- Can be applied **without locating all of the information in scope of a request** but can only be applied when specific criteria apply
- The “Appropriate Limit” is 18 hours of staff time which equates to £450.
- Please note that we can include the following activities:-
 - *Determining whether you hold the information;*
 - *Finding the requested information, or records containing the information;*
 - *Retrieving the information or records; and*
 - *Extracting the requested information from records.*
- You cannot include time taken to redact the information or time taken to write the refusal notice.
- You should ask how many records they would have to check; the time taken per record or the cost in producing a report to interrogate the system for the information requested in order that you can give the applicant an appropriate explanation.
- Please also advise the applicant how they may redefine their request to receive information (eg ask for 1 years’ data instead of 5 years data). If the applicant redefines the request you can log it as a new FOI
- Where requests span several departments/ service areas you can ask each department for a time estimate; if this exceeds 18 hours then you can apply this exemption
- Where multiple similar requests are received from the same applicant then you can aggregate for cost purposes if to respond would exceed 18 hours