

FOI Appeal process for applicants

1. Introduction

This document outlines the appeal process for someone who has requested information from Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This appeal process has been prepared using guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office and other relevant sources. This document has been designed to help you to understand how to appeal about the way a request has been handled. Using this process will not affect your right to appeal directly to the Information Commissioner, however, it is usually a quicker resolution when using this process.

2. Who can appeal?

Anyone who has requested information from the Trust in writing can appeal. If you have requested information and you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with your request or you believe that the Trust is not complying with its Publication Scheme, you can use the appeal process to have the matter reviewed.

If someone who requested information would like to appeal but cannot do so themselves then you can appeal on their behalf, but it will help us if you make it clear that you are doing so.

3. What can I appeal about?

You can appeal about the range, amount and format of information we have sent following a request. You can also appeal about the way a request was handled – for example, the time it took to respond, or the way letters were worded.

4. How do I appeal?

If you are not happy with the way your request for information has been handled, please contact the Trust's Freedom of Information Team in the first instance at:

Freedom of Information Team
Information Governance
First Floor, South Wing
St Thomas' Hospital
Westminster Bridge Road
SE1 7EH
Tel: 020 7188 7525
Email: foi@gstt.nhs.uk

To enable us to deal with your appeal as quickly as possible, it will help if you can supply the original log number that would have been notified to you, and the reason for your appeal

5. What happens to my appeal?

The Trust operates a two-stage review process.

- Initially the Information Governance team will work with you to try to resolve the issue in an informal manner.
- If this does not resolve the situation to your satisfaction, then following notification from yourself, a full review of your request and the area(s) of concern raised will be undertaken by the Information Governance Manager. You will be kept informed of progress and you should receive a formal response from the Trust.

If we believe after completing both stages that our original response was correct, we will let you know this, and inform you of your options (see *"What if I'm still not satisfied"*).

At any stage during the review process, if it becomes evident that the Trust has not followed proper procedures, or has failed to provide a high quality of service, we will be in contact with you regarding this issue.

6. What if I'm still not satisfied?

If you are still not happy with the way we have dealt with the request and appeal, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner, who may investigate the matter on your behalf. This option is open to you at all times, but we would prefer to resolve these issues at a Trust level if possible, as this is likely to be quicker and easier for all concerned.

It is the Information Commissioner who will decide if he/she will investigate or not. If he/she does, we will make all the information available to you and to the Information Commissioner. The contact details are below:-

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
<https://ico.org.uk/>