



msletb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board

Mr. John Hamill

Email: [REDACTED]

26th October 2021

Re: FOI Request – M21/1210/JH

Dear Mr. Hamill,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for records held by this body, which was received on 12th October 2021 by email. Your request was as follows:

"I would like to make a formal request for access to records under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. In accordance with Section 12 of the Act, I am requesting that you should send me copies of all email invitations for teachers to attend Religious Education in-services days, which were received during calendar year 2016. This relates to invitations received by MSLETB itself, as well as invitations received by any and all schools under the purview of MSLETB.

For clarity, I do not require emails sent by schools in response to these invitations, which may discuss which teachers had planned to attend which events. My only interest is in the invitations themselves (including any information about the agenda for these events) which should not contain any personal information. I understand that the number of in-service days per annum is not large, such that the number of invitations to attend in-service days for only one subject during one calendar year should not be excessive.

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, I will look forward to your detailed response to these requests within four weeks of the date of this correspondence."

1. Details of Fees

Section 27 of the Act provides that a public body "shall charge" a fee where a request will take longer than five hours to process; see below extract of Section 27 from the FOI Act. I wish to advise you of the costs of your request as set out in Section 27(2) and (3).

It is my understanding from your request that MSLETB's FOI Unit would be required to search all teacher's email accounts across all 17 second level schools under the purview of MSLETB and also various email accounts across MSLETB itself. After careful consideration and consultations, I estimate that it will take well in excess of 36 hours to complete the 'search and retrieval' on your request. The prescribed amount chargeable for each such hour is €20.00, resulting in a fee which will exceed the upper ceiling limit of €700.00 as set out in the Act under Section 27(12). Accordingly, I have no option but to refuse this request on this basis.

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Please let me know if you wish to explore possible amendments to your request which might reduce or eliminate the requirement to charge fees in this matter. I would be happy to discuss the information that we can electronically extract and if you are interested in discussing this, please give me a call on 094 9024188 or send an email freedomofinformation@msletb.ie. In this regard the FOI Unit is happy to assist you in refining your request.

On receipt of your revised request and depending on the scope, we will advise what, if any, fees apply at that stage. In the meantime, I am obliged to seek a deposit within 10 days of receipt of your original request and therefore, you are asked to pay a deposit of €100 if you wish to proceed with a revised request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque made payable to Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB. If you wish to make payment by electronic means, please contact freedomofinformation@msletb.ie and we will provide details.

2. Rights of appeal

A separate course open to you now is to seek a review of this decision to impose the stated fee. If you are unhappy with this decision, you may appeal it. In the event that you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, Newtown, Castlebar, Co Mayo, F23 DV78 or by e-mail to freedomofinformation@msletb.ie.

Your correspondence should include a fee of €30 [€10 for medical card holder] for processing the appeal. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque made payable to Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB. If you wish to make payment by electronic means, please contact freedomofinformation@msletb.ie and we will provide details. You should make your appeal within 4 weeks from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

3. Publication

All non-personal FOI requests will be recorded on an FOI disclosure log which will be published on the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board website in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Orla Reilly
Head of Corporate Services

NB:*** - In any correspondence that you have with us either by letter/phone/email, please could you quote the FOI Request Reference Number, as shown on this letter. Many thanks.

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