



Trust Headquarters  
Nexus House  
4 Gatwick Road  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH10 9BG

Tel: 0300 123 0999  
[www.secamb.nhs.uk](http://www.secamb.nhs.uk)

Internal Ref: 250738  
Email:

Dear ,

The trust acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) request, referenced above. Please ensure you quote this number in any future correspondence.

### **FOI Request**

You asked us:

**Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information for the period January 1st, 2020 to present. The aim of these requests is to understand how suspension is applied across different staff bands, how it is recorded and reviewed, and whether internal systems and policies support consistent, fair, and well-documented decision-making.**

#### **1. Suspension Application by Staff Band**

**For each year since January 1st, 2020, please provide a breakdown of all staff suspensions, grouped by staff band (e.g. Band 3–5, Band 6, Band 7, Band 8a and above). For each group, include:**

- Number of staff suspended**
- Average length of suspension (calendar days)**
- Number of suspensions exceeding 70 days and 180 days**
- Outcome of suspension (e.g. no action, written warning, dismissal, resignation during suspension)**



## 2. Systems Used to Record and Monitor Suspensions

For each suspension case or band grouping, please provide:

- What system(s) were used to log and manage the suspension (e.g. ESR, SharePoint, HR tracker, Teams, spreadsheets)
- Whether any automated alerts or escalation mechanisms exist for prolonged suspensions

## 3. Suspension Policy and Oversight

Please provide the current policy or guidance covering staff suspensions, including:

- When suspension should and should not be used
- Roles authorised to approve suspensions
- Required review intervals and documentation
- Escalation processes for cases exceeding 70 days

## 4. Internal Reviews or Audits on Suspension Practice

Please provide any internal or external audits, evaluations, or reviews from January 2020 to present that assessed:

- The quality or completeness of suspension records
- Missed or delayed suspension reviews
- Disparities in how suspension is used across bands
- Identified risks due to poor documentation or oversight

## 5. Classification of Misconduct and Suspension Decisions

Please provide documents or policies used by SECAMB to define and differentiate between:

- Misconduct
- Serious misconduct
- Gross misconduct

Also include who is authorised to classify behaviour at each level, and what oversight (HR/legal) is required before suspension is enacted under these categories.

## 6. Known Issues with Suspension Tracking or Case Records

Please provide any:

- Reports of lost, incomplete, or corrupted suspension records
- Risk register entries related to suspension documentation or decision-making
- Board or executive-level concerns raised about the reliability or fairness of suspension practices



## Formal Response

The Trust confirms it holds the information you have requested.

### 1. Suspension Application by Staff Band

For each year since January 1st, 2020, please provide a breakdown of all staff suspensions, grouped by staff band (e.g. Band 3–5, Band 6, Band 7, Band 8a and above). For each group, include:

- Number of staff suspended
- Average length of suspension (calendar days)
- Number of suspensions exceeding 70 days and 180 days
- Outcome of suspension (e.g. no action, written warning, dismissal, resignation during suspension)

Year	Total Suspension	Pay Band	Average Length (days)	Exceeding 70 days	Exceeding 180 days	Outcome
2020	22	Under 10 for each category	118	14	Under 10	Under 10 for each category
2021	13	Under 10 for each category	76	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10 for each category
2022	24	Under 10 for each category	94	11	Under 10	Under 10 for each category
2023	19	Under 10 for each category	119	10	Under 10	Under 10 for each category
2024	27	Under 10 for each category	153	21	Under 10	Under 10 for each category
2025	12	Under 10 for each category	58	Under 10	0	Under 10 for each category



## 2. Systems Used to Record and Monitor Suspensions

For each suspension case or band grouping, please provide:

- What system(s) were used to log and manage the suspension (e.g. ESR, SharePoint, HR tracker, Teams, spreadsheets)

Suspensions are recorded on the HR Tracker and documented on HR spreadsheets

- Whether any suspension review dates were recorded

Yes, suspension review dates are recorded on the HR Tracker and HR Spreadsheets

- Whether any automated alerts or escalation mechanisms exist for prolonged suspensions

No, however suspensions are monitored and reviewed every 2 weeks at a Senior Leadership level.

## 3. Suspension Policy and Oversight

Please provide the current policy or guidance covering staff suspensions, including:

- When suspension should and should not be used
- Roles authorised to approve suspensions
- Required review intervals and documentation
- Escalation processes for cases exceeding 70 days

Disciplinary Policy attached

## 4. Internal Reviews or Audits on Suspension Practice

Please provide any internal or external audits, evaluations, or reviews from January 2020 to present that assessed:

- The quality or completeness of suspension records
- Missed or delayed suspension reviews
- Disparities in how suspension is used across bands
- Identified risks due to poor documentation or oversight

No specific audits, however, a system is in place to review suspension data every 2 weeks

## 5. Classification of Misconduct and Suspension Decisions

Please provide documents or policies used by SECamb to define and differentiate between:

- Misconduct
- Serious misconduct
- Gross misconduct

Also include who is authorised to classify behaviour at each level, and what oversight (HR/legal) is required before suspension is enacted under these categories.

Disciplinary Policy attached



## 6. Known Issues with Suspension Tracking or Case Records

Please provide any:

- Reports of lost, incomplete, or corrupted suspension records
- Risk register entries related to suspension documentation or decision-making
- Board or executive-level concerns raised about the reliability or fairness of suspension practices

No centrally recorded identifiable data

\* Data blurring at less-than-10: The Trust can confirm that this information exists. However, where an output represents fewer than 10 individuals or incidents in the period requested, we have not provided exact figures. This practice is known as data blurring, which serves to mitigate against the risk of possible re-identification of individual data subjects via data recombination (sometimes referred to as jigsawing). This risk is assessed in accordance with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) *Anonymisation Code of Practice*, in relation to Section 40(2) of the FOIA 2000

### Next steps

Please note you will be able to source a lot of information which is made available on our website.

Should you be dissatisfied with our response then in the first instance please contact Richard Banks, Head of Corporate Governance, via the following email address: [FOI@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:FOI@secamb.nhs.uk)

You can ask us to review our original response. If you would like us to carry out an internal review, please let us know within 40 working days of you receiving our original response. This review will be conducted by an individual who was not directly involved in reviewing the original response, ordinarily, the Trust Data Protection Officer.

We will endeavour to complete this request within 20 working days.

Should you remain dissatisfied then you can contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (ICO). Complaints to the ICO should be made within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: [www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints](http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints).

Alternatively, the ICO's postal address is:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

**Freedom of Information Coordinator**  
**South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**



Saving Lives,  
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon