

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust charging for information regimes

Charges for information – Data Protection Act 1998

A £10 administration fee is payable and this includes any additional charges for photocopying and postage. The maximum fee chargeable is £50.

Subject Access Administrators and Managers have the right to exempt applicants from charges for records requests under special circumstances.

Charges for information – Freedom of Information Act 2000

Wherever possible, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust will not charge for information provided under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The following exceptions apply:

- Public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of determining if it holds the relevant information, locating and retrieving the information and, where necessary, extracting the information from a document would exceed the appropriate limit set down under section 12 of the Act. The appropriate limit has been set as a figure of £450 for public authorities. This figure is calculated at a rate of £25 per hour and therefore any request that exceeds 18 hours of work will normally be rejected. Wherever possible Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust will work with the applicant, under section 16 obligations of the Act, to try to disclose information by looking to reduce some of the work needed to comply with the original request for information. In certain circumstances Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust can offer the applicant the option of paying for the information. In this instance the enquirer would have to pay the full cost, not just the amount over and above £450.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act, public bodies can charge for disbursements. These will cover the administrative tasks such as photocopying of documents. In most circumstances Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust will waive these charges, however they reserve the right to utilise them in exceptional instances where a request for information requires an uncommonly large amount of photocopying. If disbursements are charged they will be kept to a reasonable level and the applicant will be advised of any applicable from the outset.