



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Information Management and Governance  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

foi.officer@parliament.scot

8 April 2022

Dear Requester

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: 2022-672876**

We acknowledge your request for the following information:

*I would like some clarification under Freedom of Information surrounding a claim today by the First Minister that Scottish Ministers "donate" their salary increases back into the public purse.*

<https://mobile.twitter.com/NicolaSturgeon/status/1503353396019011585>

*Can you confirm what the equivalent salaries for Scottish Ministers and the First Minister was in 2007/8?*

*Can you confirm that there is not a mechanism in place around Scottish Ministerial salaries to reduce the salaries paid to Ministers from the salaries published on the Parliament website to an agreed rate not published and in the public domain?*

<https://www.parliament.scot/msps/msp-salaries>

*Can you confirm that Scottish Ministerial annual salaries are in line with the current published rates above?*

*If they are not in line with the current published rates can you confirm the average Ministerial salary currently being paid?*

Your request was received on 14 March 2022 and has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A).

The salaries paid to the First Minister and Scottish Government Ministers for 2007/08 were as follows:

First Minister - £76,907 per annum

Cabinet Secretary - £39,897 per annum

Minister - £24,989 per annum

Scottish Government Ministers are paid in accordance with the [Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme](#). The Scheme provides for a salary reduction only where an MSP is also a Member of the House of Commons or the House of Lords, or where an individual is imprisoned. It also provides that any increase in salaries will be directly linked to public sector pay rises in Scotland.

Scottish Government Ministers and Law Officers agreed to freeze their pay at the April 2009 pay level. The Salaries Scheme does not give the power to withhold a salary increase. In order therefore to implement the pay freeze the equivalent net value of the difference between Scottish Government Ministers' salary level, at April 2009 and the current salary level is deducted on a monthly basis and payments are then repaid to the Scottish Government for payment into the Scottish Consolidated Fund.

I can therefore confirm that there is a mechanism in place to reduce the salaries paid to Scottish Government Ministers from the salaries published on the Parliament website. You can access information about the salaries paid to Ministers and Law Officers and the pay freeze commitment in the Scottish Government's Consolidated Accounts. The latest published version for 2020-21 (with salary information and details of the pay freeze commitment at pages 84 and 85) can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

I can confirm that the salaries paid to Scottish Ministers are in line with the rates published in the Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme, referred to above. The rates quoted in the Scottish Government's Consolidated Accounts of £93,391 for the First Minister and £48,449 for Cabinet Ministers are effective from 1 April 2020 and also for the 2020/21 financial year due to the pay freeze. A pay freeze was applied for the financial year 2021/22 so the rate remained the same for 2021/22. The rate is due to increase for the 2022/23 financial year to £96,567 for the First Minister, £50,097 for Cabinet Secretaries and £31,383 for Ministers with effect from 1 April 2022.

As stated above the Salaries Scheme does not give the power to withhold a salary increase. The current gross annual salary rate is therefore paid to the Scottish Government Ministers. A deduction is then made from the net salary, as described above, to reduce it to the equivalent net salary that would have been paid based on the 2009 salary rates.

In keeping with our FOI procedures, this information may also be posted on the Parliament's disclosure log (usually within 24 hours). For further details on the Parliament's Disclosure Log and the information released under FOI, visit:

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/abouttheparliament/17700.aspx>

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<https://www.parliament.scot/about/copyright>

We would welcome feedback or comment on how we handled your request. Please feel free to contact the Head of Information Governance at [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)

Please find below Annex A, which explains how we handle FOI requests and reviews.

**We are currently working remotely and so would ask you to contact us by email at [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)**

Yours sincerely,

Robin Davidson  
Head of Information Governance

## REQUESTS MADE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

### How we handle FOI requests

Information on how we handle FOI requests is available on the Parliament's website at:

[Privacy notice: Information rights: Freedom of Information request handling | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

Alternatively, please contact the Public Information & Resources Team to request a copy.

<https://www.parliament.scot/contact-us>

### Review

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we have dealt with your request for information, you can ask us to review our decision and actions. You must do this in writing (or other permanent form) within 40 working days of the date of this letter, stating the reasons for your dissatisfaction, and we will respond within 20 working days of receipt. A request for a review should be made to the Head of Information Governance:

Post: Head of Information Governance  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP  
Telephone: 0131 348 5281

We welcome calls using the Text Relay service or in British Sign Language through [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#).

E-mail: [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)

### Application to the Scottish Information Commissioner

If, on the outcome of any review, you are still dissatisfied, or if we are unable to resolve any other complaint, then you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner:

Post: The Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS

Email: [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)

Telephone: 01334 464610

Fax: 01334 464611

Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

A decision by the Scottish Information Commissioner may be appealed on a point of law to the Court of Session.

### **Copyright in relation to information provided**

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### **Feedback or comment**

We would welcome feedback or comment on how we handled your request. Please contact the Head of Information Governance.

### **Data Protection**

If you wish to find out more about how we use your personal data then you can access our Privacy Notice at the following link:

[Privacy notice: Information rights: Freedom of Information request handling | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

### **Complaints**

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we dealt with your enquiry, then you may wish to raise the matter with Public Information and Resources.

### **How to contact us**

Post: The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Telephone: 0131 348 5000  
0800 092 7500 (Public Enquiries)  
0131 348 5395 (Gàidhlig)

We also welcome calls using the Text Relay service or in British Sign Language through [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#).

E-mail: [info@parliament.scot](mailto:info@parliament.scot)