

FOI number: **HBC_FOI_20200390**
Date FOI Received: **02/07/2020**
Department: **Hertfordshire County Council** (Not Hertsmere Borough Council)
Title: **Adoption and COVID-19**
Description: **Details on actions taken around adoption and children during the COVID-19 Coronavirus lockdown.**

Request: (As Redacted sent by requestor)

Hello,

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information:

1. Please could you a) provide a statement of the overarching approach that you have taken to utilising the legislative flexibilities provided by the [The Adoption and Children \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#) and b) confirm who signed this off within both the local authority and any providers that you commission to run children's social care services?

2. With reference to the need to record any use of the legislative flexibilities provided by the The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 as well as the 'reasons for doing so' and 'local circumstances that have given arise to the need to use the flexibilities' – as set out in the Government's Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for children's social care services as per 6 May 2020 – please confirm how many of each specific flexibility has been utilised in total and in each month since the regulations came into force, and summarise the reasons and local circumstances which made the use of each type of flexibility necessary?

In your answer, please include both the specific regulation that has been utilised and a description of the flexibility (it may be helpful to make reference to the Children's Commissioner for England's summary of each of the regulations), and, as far as possible, present the information as per the following table:

Regulation	Description of flexibility	Total number of uses	Number of uses in May	Number of uses in June	Summary of reasons and local circumstances
Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulation 23	An emergency placement with an approved foster carer can now last 24 weeks, rather than 6 days, even if that foster carer is eg not approved to look after that many children	XX	XX	XX	E.g. Shortage of foster carers and inability to recruit more

3. What information relating to your use of the legislative flexibilities provided by the The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 has

been a) requested by or b) provided to Ofsted, and what, if any, further action are you aware of Ofsted taking in response?

I would appreciate it if you could provide the answers to questions 1 and 3 in the form of a document, and the answer to question 2 in the form of a spreadsheet.

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, as to how I can refine my request.

If you can identify any ways that my request could be refined I would be grateful for any further advice and assistance.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me via email and I will be very happy to clarify what I am asking for and discuss the request.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

Response: (Response as Redacted sent by service)

Thank you for your query.

Hertfordshire is a two tier area and this service is not provided at a district level but by the County Council.

Therefore, please refer your FOI request to Hertfordshire County Council who will be able to help you.

Kind regards
FOI