



20 May 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: AD-IG-01(2)-2016-55
Key Word: Agency Staff
Subject: HR and Corporate Services Directorate
Request: **Date Received:** 21/04/2016
Monitoring Date: 22/04/2016
Date of Response: 20/05/2016

Thank you for your request for information received on 21 April 2016 and which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would also inform you that Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and which is detailed below and attached for your attention.

As you will be aware your request can be in the form of questions rather than specific documents however the Trust is not required to your questions if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgement that is not already recorded.

Question 1

I would like to ask why two positions ie Chief Executive Office and Legal/Complaints Department in HR&CS have been filled for a long period of time through agency staff?

Answer 1

The Trust does not hold any documented information to respond to this question.

Question 2

Why have these posts not being filled with a temporary NIAS contract?

Answer 2

The Trust does not hold any documented information to respond to this question.

Question 3

Is there any plans for these posts to be filled in the future? if yes in what time period?

Answer 3

The Trust does not hold any documented information to respond to this question.

Question 4

If yes how would they be advertised / filled ie internal trawl / HSC trawls / advertised publically?

Answer 4

Not applicable

Question 5

Do the trust have a transfer policy for staff who wish to change department / role?

Answer 5

Yes. Please find attached Voluntary Transfer Policy for your perusal.

I hope the above assists in relation to the use Freedom of Information Act and I am sorry that we cannot assist you further at this time.



Please note that, under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations, if you wish to publish or otherwise use this information besides for your own means, you will need to seek our permission to do so.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Finance and ICT Director, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the Trust has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Website: ni@ico.org.uk

Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF

Telephone: 028 9027 8757 or 0303 123 1114 (Belfast based Office)

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion. Please be advised that NIAS replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.niamb.co.uk>.

Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE



VOLUNTARY TRANSFER POLICY



NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

VOLUNTARY TRANSFER POLICY

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) provides a regional ambulance service to the population of Northern Ireland and recognises that staff may wish to transfer regionally within the Service.
- 1.2. This policy aims to set out the means by which all personnel within the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service can apply voluntarily for a permanent transfer from their substantive position.
- 1.3. This policy is to ensure a fair and consistent means of balancing staff preferences with operational needs of service provision.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 To be eligible to apply for a voluntary transfer, you must be requesting a transfer to a post comparable to your substantive post which is: -
 - * On the same Agenda for Change Pay Band or same grade;
 - * The same contractual hours;
 - * Has the same job description and personnel specification.
- 2.2 The Trust is committed to ensuring statutory compliance and best practice HR principles in the implementation of this Policy and associated Procedures.
- 2.3 All transfer activity will be in line with the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy which means no applicant for transfer will receive less favourable treatment because of their age, gender, race, ethnic or national origin, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, sexual orientation, disability, Political opinion, Union affiliation or on grounds which cannot be justified.
- 2.4 Assistance with travel expenses to a new base will not be available to staff transferring voluntarily under the voluntary transfer procedure.
- 2.5 Staff must specify what station/department/division they wish to transfer to. Only one transfer request to one station/department/division will be considered at any one time.
- 2.6 There will be a single regional transfer list for each skill level and/or grade of staff with no divisional/departmental boundaries.
- 2.6 Job Vacancies that arise will normally be filled in order of the date on which they became vacant/became available.

2.7 Any transfer potentially affected by exceptional circumstances of the Trust, will be officially notified to the individual(s) concerned.

AGREEMENT on the above Policy has been agreed between the following individuals: -

Management Representative: -

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chair of HR JCG)

Trade Union Representatives

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

January 2010



VOLUNTARY TRANSFER PROCEDURE FOR OPERATIONAL STAFF

1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Management Responsibilities

- 1.1.1 The overall responsibility of the management of transfers rests with the Employee Resourcing Manager who will oversee the effective implementation of the Policy and Procedure.
- 1.1.2 It is the responsibility of the Employee Resourcing Department to maintain a register of transfer requests from individual members of staff recording any changes as appropriate and to administer the transfer procedure.
- 1.1.3 It is the responsibility of the Area Manager to inform the Employee Resourcing Manager of any vacancies that arise within their area of responsibility.
- 1.1.4 It is the responsibility of Department/Area Managers to notify any staff who are on a period of absence, of the date(s) the Transfer Panel are meeting.

1.2 Staff Responsibilities

- 1.2.1 It is the responsibility of requesting staff to register with the Employee Resourcing Manager their interest in moving to a post at another location by completing Form VTP_ERM01 (Appendix 2).
- 1.2.2 It is the responsibility of the requesting staff to ensure they receive confirmation of the transfer request (Form VTP_ERM02 - Appendix 3) which confirms they have been placed on the transfer list.
- 1.2.3 Staff must notify the Employee Resourcing Manager if they wish to be removed from the regional voluntary transfer list 1 week in advance of the Panel meeting by completing Form VTP_ERM03 (Appendix 4). Removal from the list will not be considered after this closing date.
- 1.2.4 It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to avail themselves of NIAS communication channels, such as e-mail, station notice boards and NIAS News, to become aware of scheduled voluntary transfer panel meetings.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The Trust reserves the right to move staff outside of this procedure in line with individual contracts of employment and/or NIAS policies e.g.,

Harassment/Disciplinary/Displacement. This may take precedent over a transfer request.

- 2.2 In exceptional circumstances the Trust reserves the right to defer the implementation of this procedure in line with the exigencies of the service. Transfers potentially affected by exceptional circumstances will be notified to the individuals concerned.
- 2.3 Core rota staff will normally only transfer to relief positions at a new location.
- 2.4 A transfer will not be considered unless the individual has registered an interest in accordance with this procedure and will not be considered after the panel has convened.
- 2.5 Staff will be notified of when the Transfer Panel are due to meet via NIAS communication channels, such as the examples listed above
- 2.6 Staff who have been granted a transfer cannot refuse that transfer.
- 2.7 Staff may request to know their own position within the transfer list and how many requests have been made for any given location.
- 2.8 A transfer request can only be made at the current grade of the applicant.
- 2.9 Staff can only request a voluntary transfer to a location that exists.

3.0 PROCEDURE FOR OPERATIONAL STAFF

- 3.1 The member of staff wishing to transfer must complete the standard pro-forma ERM 01 (Appendix 2) and send it to the Employee Resourcing Department with details of their transfer request. No other format will be accepted.
- 3.2 The Employee Resourcing Department will date stamp the pro-forma and acknowledge receipt of the request to transfer within 10 working days by issuing form ERM 02 (Appendix 3). It is at this point the applicant will be placed on the transfer list. Therefore it is imperative that if the applicant does not receive confirmation of the transfer request they contact the Employee Resourcing Department as they may not have been placed on the transfer list.
- 3.3 The transfer list will be maintained in chronological order from receipt of confirmation of request to transfer and will be divided by skill level. Paramedic-in-training applicants will be placed on the EMT transfer list until qualifying as a paramedic. At this point they must re-apply for a paramedic transfer request and will be placed at the bottom of the list.
- 3.4 Should no differential exist between two or more members of staff in the processing of transfer requests, then a random draw will take place.
- 3.5 The voluntary transfer list will operate on a '*first come, first served*' basis. Relief staff will be given first priority for core vacancies within their existing station except in circumstances outlined in point 2.1
- 3.6 A transfer panel will normally convene on a 3 monthly basis. This will consist of the Resource Manager, H.R. Manager and an Area Manager, or delegate as necessary. The Panel will honour the requests in chronological order matched with current vacancies.

- 3.7 For recruitment purposes the transfer panel may have to convene on an ad-hoc basis.
- 3.8 Mutual 'swaps' between staff based at the same station can be arranged at Station Level with Station management approval, provided the swap is like for like, i.e. core line paramedic with another core line paramedic. All 4 parties concerned must agree in writing prior to such movements. Staff are not permitted to mutually swap with staff from another location. The swap cannot take effect until the station manager has given one months notice, prior to the change, to the Resource Management Centre.
- 3.9 The Transfer Panel must liaise with the relevant Area Managers to approve the staff release.

AGREEMENT on the above Procedure has been agreed between the following individuals: -

Management Representative: -

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chair of HR JCG)

Trade Union Representatives

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

January 2010

Document Reference:	Document title:
Authorisation date:	Document type;
Review date:	Responsible authority
Signed off by	

FACILITATING CURRENT TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

In order to facilitate the transition to one regional voluntary transfer policy and procedure the following course of action will be taken.

Staff on the current transfer list who have requested transfer to move to more than one station will be asked to re-register selecting only one station from their original request. This request will be placed on the new transfer list at the date of original application.

Staff on the current transfer list who have requested only one station will be transferred to the new regional voluntary transfer list at the date of original request.

PROCEDURE FOR EAST DIVISIONS TO ADOPT TRANSFER POLICY

Relief staff in East City and East Country divisions will be asked to complete the preference list for a final time. Staff will be made aware this is the final time prior to adapting the new system.

Once the relief staff have been placed, this will then become their permanent base station. Seniority will be given to the relief staff with the longest length of service at their present skill level. Staff can immediately apply for a transfer as per new policy.

Should no differential exist between two or more members of staff in the processing of transfer requests, then a random draw will take place witnessed by a senior manager in the HR department.

Relief staff will be placed according to the availability of 1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd and so on preference matched with the needs of the service.

The preference system will cease to exist.

The 5 Divisions are

<u>Belfast</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>South</u>
Ardoyne	Antrim	Ards	Enniskillen	Armagh
Broadway	Cookstown	Downpatrick	Londonderry	Banbridge
Knockbracken	Magherafelt	Lisburn	Strabane	Craigavon
Bridge End	Coleraine	Bangor	Limavady	Dungannon
Kennedy Way (Pcs)	Ballymoney	Newcastle	Castlederg	Kilkeel
	Ballycastle	Derriaghy	Omagh	Newry
	Larne	Ballynahinch		
	Whiteabbey			
	Ballymena			
	Carrickfergus			



Voluntary Transfer Request Application

<Date>

<Name>

<Address>

<Grade>

<Station>

I <Name> wish to register an application to transfer from

<Current Station>

To

<Transferring Station>

I understand I will be placed on the transfer list at the date of acknowledgment from the Employee Resourcing Section and once granted the transfer I cannot refuse to relocate.

Signed

<Signature>



Voluntary Transfer Request Acknowledgement Form

<Date>

Dear <Name>

Your application to request a transfer from <Station> to <Station> has been received by the Employee Resourcing Section.

As you are aware the transfer list is managed in chronological order and your request has been filed as of the above date.

Yours sincerely

Marie Mullan (Mrs)

EMPLOYEE RESOURCING MANAGER



Voluntary Transfer Request Removal Application

<Date>

<Name>

<Address>

<Grade>

<Station>

Please remove my transfer request from

<Current Station>

To

<Transferring Station>

I understand should I wish to re-register a transfer request it will be from the new date of notification of the transfer being received.

Signed

<Signature>