

# Information Notice template – How to Guide

## Introduction

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The Information Notice template should always be used when drafting an Information Notice. It has been formatted in a way that is easy to use and provide a clear narrative account of the investigation, decision and reasons for it.

The template will open from ICON in a read-only version; use the Save As function in the file menu to place in the relevant folder on your personal drive. Then add the document to CMEH before you start drafting it, using the name "Information Notice".

The first part of this Guide describes how the template is formatted and should be used. The second part follows the structure of the IN template explaining what goes where.

## Part 1

The template uses styles in Word to define what each paragraph is, and how it looks. This means that there is no need to apply any formatting to the document – select a style for each paragraph and the formatting will happen automatically. The following styles for paragraphs are available:

<b>Heading 1</b>	The main title of the Information Notice use this style
<b>Heading 3</b>	date at the top of the Information Notice
<b>Address</b>	party details
1. Numbered paragraph	Use this style for each paragraph that should be numbered. Numbering will be automatically applied. Every paragraph apart from the summary, lists and quotes should be numbered
<b>Section heading</b>	Use for the headings of the main sections of the Information Notice
Tribunal address	First Tier Information Tribunal address in the Right of Appeal section

Normal	ICO corporate style. Text that does not go in a numbered paragraph e.g. Summary should be formatted 'normal'.
Header	includes the case reference number and the ICO logo
Footer	includes the page number

## Styles in Word

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Styles in Word are accessed via the Styles and Formatting sidebar. You must use styles in the document, and not the format buttons in the top toolbar (with the exception of bold for emphasis).

### Accessing the Styles and Formatting sidebar

To access the styles and formats within the template:

- Go to the Format menu
- Select "Styles and formatting"
- The Styles and Formatting sidebar will then appear in a right hand pane in the Word document
- Click on the drop down box at the bottom of the pane labelled 'show', and select 'Available styles'

All the formatting and styles for the template will then appear in the sidebar.

## Altering the format

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The template has been set up so that the template will automatically use the correct format for each section of the Decision Notice. For example, you do not need to manually add numbering for paragraph's; simply hit the enter key after the first paragraph and the next paragraph will appear. If you delete a paragraph from the document, it will automatically update the numbering.

Paragraph spacing is automatic – you only need to hit enter once to start a new paragraph.

If you wish to alter the style - for example from normal text to a sub-sub-heading - click anywhere in the paragraph and select the sub-sub-section heading from the styles and formatting sidebar. The text will then change to this style, with the correct format.

## Dates

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Dates on the Decision Notice need to be written in the following way:-

Top of the Decision Notice – **Date: 30 September 2010**

Bottom of the Decision Notice - **Dated the 30<sup>th</sup> day of September 2010**

## Names and Addresses

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Names and addresses of public authorities and complainants should **not** appear in bold type.

## Terminology

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'Decision Notice' should be capitalised.

The words 'public authority' and 'complainant' should not be capitalised.

Complainants should be referred to as 'the complainant' or 'he' or 'she'.

## Text spacing

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Only one space should be used after full stops and commas.

Do not leave the last line or word of a paragraph appearing at the top of a page, with the remainder on the preceding page.

Do not leave the first line of a paragraph at the bottom of a page, with the remainder overleaf, e.g.

Ensure addresses are not split between pages (e.g. the Information Tribunal address).

## Part 2

The first section to be completed is the PA name and address, just make sure you check that the officer at the PA you have been dealing with is based at the same offices as the head of the PA (not always the case, especially with central government departments).

If the decision relates to an executive agency, the agency should be named as the public authority at the head of the Information Notice and the name of the government department should follow in brackets e.g.

**Public Authority:** Child Support Agency (an executive agency of the Department for Work and Pensions)

### Section 51

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This section simply includes the text of section 51 of the Act, which is the legal basis under which Information Notices are issued. There is no need to change it.

### Application under section 50

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This section is for stating that the Commissioner has received a complaint under section 50; fill in the name and address of the complainant and the name of the public authority.

### Nature of Complaint

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In this section you should set out the nature of the complaint received by the ICO. This should include details of the initial request to the public authority, any subsequent review, and the initial complaint to the ICO. You should also detail what failed informal attempts have been made to elicit the information, making the issuing of a formal notice necessary.

### Information Required

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Here you should describe the information that you are seeking from the public authority. Begin with the standard paragraph requesting the information, then include the final paragraph of the accompanying letter that details what that information is.

## **The Investigation**

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This is a standard paragraph stating what may happen if the PA do not comply with the notice.

## **Right of Appeal**

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This section should detail how either party may appeal against the Information Notice.