



[REDACTED]

Date  
30 September 2024

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Post Office  
100 Wood Street  
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

**Classification:**  
Public

Dear [REDACTED],

## Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/00263

We are writing in response to your letter received by Post Office Limited (“**Post Office**”) on 5 February, which has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“**FOIA**”). We sincerely apologise for the delay in responding to this request.

In your letter you have requested the information shown verbatim in bold below:

**“I would be grateful if you are able to provide me with information about the number of postmasters and postmistresses prosecuted for each of the years 1980- 2020.”**

We can confirm that Post Office does hold some of information in scope of your request as presented in the table below. It is important, however, to note the following which impact the figures we have provided:

1. We have interpreted “prosecution” as any case about which Post Office is aware which resulted in a decision to charge an individual for any one or more alleged offences of varying natures (including, robberies, burglaries as well those involving fraud, theft, and false accounting).
2. Your request has been interpreted to include only prosecuted postmasters and postmistresses (“**postmasters**”) and to exclude those in other identified roles. Therefore, the figures in the table relate to postmasters and those whose roles

could not be identified but exclude other individuals who were prosecuted in the requested period (e.g. assistants and clerks) as your request is limited to postmasters.

3. Provided that Post Office had an involvement in the case, all known prosecutions have been included, regardless of the prosecutor, that is, one of Post Office, Royal Mail Group Limited, the Crown Prosecution Service, Department for Work and Pensions, and the Northern Irish and Scottish prosecutors.
4. All such cases have been included, regardless of their outcome, including acquittals, convictions, possible convictions, prosecutions that were discontinued or dropped for other reasons, as well as unknown post-charge outcomes. All cases that did not result in a decision to charge (e.g., investigations that resulted in no further action or that resulted in a caution) have been excluded.
5. The yearly figures have been calculated according to the date on which an investigation started, although the prosecution might have occurred in a later year. This is the simplest way to identify cases per year, as information as to the date of charge is not always known.
6. Overall, given the historical nature of the data concerned, with some dating back 44 years, we cannot be certain about the accuracy or completeness of the information we have provided, especially regarding pre-1999 cases.
7. Please note that Post Office continues to receive material from third parties regarding cases. Consequently, the numbers provided in response to this request may change and are correct only as of 27 September 2024, based on current information known to Post Office:

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Postmasters Prosecuted</b>
1980	0
1981	0
1982	0
1983	0
1984	0
1985	0

1986	0
1987	2
1988	1
1989	0
1990s (Specific date of set up unknown but thought to be in the 1990s)*	7
1990	1
1991	5
1992	1
1993	2
1994	4
1995	2
1996	11
1997	25
1998	46
1999	62
2000s (Specific date of set up unknown but thought to be in the 2000s)*	6
2000	67
2001	48
2002	80
2003	58
2004	54
2005	49
2006	51
2007	38
2008	47
2009	70
2010s (Specific date of set up unknown but thought to be in the 2010s)*	1

2010	37
2011	43
2012	50
2013	10
2014	6
2015	5
2016	16
2017	9
2018	6
2019	4
2020	1
Unknown Date Setup	19

*\*This data includes information for that decade, but where the exact year of case creation cannot be established and have been included for completeness.*

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address above within 40 working days of receipt of this response stating your reasons for your internal review request or alternatively, by emailing [information.rights@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:information.rights@postoffice.co.uk).

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

This is why we still have the small numbers in red in the table. I will delete those or the texts in square brackets once the decision is made.

Information Commissioner's Office  
 Wycliffe House  
 Water Lane  
 Wilmslow  
 Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
[www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints](http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints)

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team

[information.rights@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:information.rights@postoffice.co.uk)

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/access-to-information/access-to-information/>

**Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy, information about how we do this can be found on our website at [www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy)**