

SPSO decision report

Case: 201706996, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: communication / staff attitude / confidentiality
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about the service provided by the Crown Office and Procurator Service (COPFS) when they were dealing with the investigation into the circumstances around her relative's death and the Victims Right of Review of that investigation. Ms C considered there was a lack of compassion when dealing with her family and that they were always having to chase for information and updates. Ms C also complained about the response she received to her complaint. Ms C considered it was not clear which part of the organisation was dealing with it. She also felt that no specific improvements were addressed as a result of her feedback about her experience.

We upheld all aspects of Ms C's complaint. We found that there was a failure to instigate communication with the family and provide updates, even if the details of those investigations could not be disclosed. There was also a failure to take reasonable care when deciding the route to a meeting room where discussions were held with the family. We considered that the organisation failed to confirm which part of the organisation was dealing with the Victims Right to Review or which part of the organisation was dealing with Ms C's complaint . We also found that when responding to Ms C's complaint there was a failure to clarify what specific steps would be taken to ensure communication with other families would be improved in the future.

Recommendations