

Stáisiún Uí Chonghaile, Baile Átha Cliath 1, D01 V6V6

Connolly Station, Dublin 1, D01 V6V6

T 01 703 4293 E foi@irishrail.ie W www.irishrail.ie



02nd December 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Re: FOI request IE_FOI_529

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your request dated 19th August 2021 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which was received by my office on that date, for records held by Iarnród Éireann.

Request:

1. The total number of complaints made to Irish Rail about Covid-19 safety measures including mask wearing and mask wearing enforcement from July 13th 2020 to November 10th 2021.
2. A copy of all complaints received by Irish Rail about Covid-19 safety measures including mask wearing and mask wearing enforcement from July 13th 2020 to November 10th 2021.
3. All correspondence between Irish Rail and the Department of Transport regarding enforcement of mandatory mask wearing on trains from July 13th 2020 to November 10th 2021.

Response:

I, Mr. Paul Slowey, Decision Maker have now made a final decision to part grant your request on 02nd December 2021.

Please find response document and schedule of records attached.

Rights of appeal

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you can make an appeal in relation to this matter, you can do so by writing to the FOI Unit, Corporate Communications, Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, Connolly Station, Amiens St, Dublin 1 or by e-mail to foi@irishrail.ie. You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays, however, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Officer on [REDACTED] or by email at foi@irishrail.ie

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Paul Slowey in blue ink.

PP

Mr. Paul Slowey,

FOI Decision Maker

Freedom of Information Request:
Schedule of Records for [IE_FOI_529](#) : Summary for Decision Making

Record No.	Date of Record	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Section of Act if applicable	Record Edited/Identify Deletions
1	~	FOI 529 Covid Complaint sample	1	Part Grant	S37	Personal information relating to others

Signed:
Lynette O'Toole
Freedom of Information / Data Protection Office

Sample of complaints

I had travelled from balbriggan to connolly yesterday for a hospital appointment I couldn't believe my journey home the amount of teenagers on train not wearing masks and no security on trains I'm a diabetic and this was my first time leaving balbriggan for an essential purpose I think security should be checking passengers are all wearing masks

Hi. Do you do anything about people not wearing masks on trains ? 4 women, 5th carriage, on the south bound 10:56 train from Balbriggan. Do you have a number for text messages about antisocial behavior ? Thx

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

No mask, playing music loud at 8.40 am on train to Maynooth. But it is much worse on the home journeys from 4.27 from Louisabridge and later. Well over 25% now you have cut number of carriages , the building sites are still open.

Good afternoon, I am on the 16:25 Cork to Houston. I feel I need to comment on lack of mask wearing on trains. There is a man walking up & down the carriage right now with no mask, talking on the phone. Two women sitting behind me, with no masks. A man sitting at the end of the carriage. No masks. Please try have inspectors onboard to police this, or stop at a station for Gardaí to board. Without inspection & punishment there is no deterrent. As I write this the maskless women have started coughing!! For what it's worth this is my first journey to Dublin in months, and for an essential reason of course

I was on the 13:50 train from Limerick to Dublin Hueston and when we stopped at Portlaoise a family got on that grew more loud and disruptive as the journey continued to Dublin, at one point standing up and play fighting. As the two youngest children climbed under the table of strangers on the other side of the carriage at one point. Not one member of the 4+ family wore masks and when a conductor of Irish Rail asked them where their masks were, they made excuses and asked should they go get one. At this point the train conductor said that they didn't need to! This same conductor went through our carriage 3 times and observed this behaviour and not once said anything. I'm disgusted at this level of negligence. It was a safety hazard as so many people were not wearing masks, not socially distancing and screaming and shouting, spreading vapour everywhere. I felt unsafe and disturbed. I can't believe this behaviour was accepted on Irish Rail

On Friday, 27th of November 2020 I got the Mallow to Tralee train at 17:25pm. There was only two carriages on this train and it was very over-crowded, with many people standing. I felt most uncomfortable seeing as we are in a pandemic and I myself have bad asthma. I hope this matter will be rectified so that it will no longer happen again. Kind Regards,

As a daily commuter using your services, I have slowly become more and more frustrated. No one is abiding by social distancing and yet no one seems to care. The Rosslare train people are sitting in whatever seats they choose and there's also about 15 people per carriage without seats, why can't you put on more trains? The bins are clearly never emptied, brimming full with beer cans and rubbish from days before, the toilets are constantly filthy. The bray train is supposed to get in for 7:58 daily, yet it never gets in on time as we sit waiting at greystones daily waiting for the dart to pass. Today for example it arrived at bray at 8:06, this completely messes up people's day, I completely understand delays every now and then but this is a daily occurrence

Hi there, I'm currently on board a 6:34 train from portmarnock to Bray. The train currently has significantly less carriages, and the carriage I happen to be on is crammed with no access to open windows. As you can imagine social distancing is non existent, every single seat is occupied including the seats with signs, and the heat is just about bearable. I would say under any condition this is ridiculous but given we are currently in a level 5 lockdown during a pandemic with a deadly virus, this is beyond unacceptable. To shorten the carriages on the

trains during such a busy hour in the morning is horrendous. Please relook at the current train situation and this cannot be right.

I have a worry re the 4 55 departure from tara st to drogheda as there is reduced carriage s leading to more crowded and no social distancing conditions with many ignoring the seating advice. Can the original carriage number be restored to what was an excellent and safe journey?

Boarded a train at 8.03am at sutton. The train arrived short and as a result no social distancing was really possible. I am just wondering what excuse you could possibly have to shorten trains in current circumstances. No social distancing is possible. People are desperate to take a seat too close to other passengers. Shortening trains has severe consequences!!! Please seriously consider your actions before it's implemented. Regards,

I travelled on a return trip from Galway - Dublin on Friday last week. It was my first time on a train this year so I was hesitant to book due to the virus but I was reassured by your website that everyone would be in masks. My train to Dublin (7.30am from Ceannt Station) was excellent - everyone in masks, a quiet train and socially distanced and spaced. My train back at 13.25pm was the opposite experience. I had to move seats a total of 4 times due to people taking off their masks. When I first boarded the train, a group of Dublin teenagers/ young adults were very clearly breaking a phase 3 lockdown, all talk of "a weekend away in Galway" and with their suitcases. It is completely unacceptable that there were no guards there to stop this happening as I'm sure many others were doing the same to escape their own lockdown and it is so unfair to the businesses they will inhabit during their stay (I understand that this is an issue for the guards so please feel free to inform them of this. I understand that I was entering a lockdown county but that was for essential medical reasons). That same group of girls got on the train and took up the 2 four seaters in front of me and completely ignored all the socially distanced signs and took off their masks immediately. I moved then and had to move the three times more times due to people sitting directly in front of me or behind me, who removed their masks to chat. Security had to deal with people being defensive when asked about a mask - again an issue for the guards but there should be an on the spot fine because the minute security walked away, the same people removed their masks. Security only passed me 2 or 3 times in the space of a 2 hour and 20 minute journey and this needs to be increased. I spent my train journey back to Galway extremely stressed because people were incredibly selfish by removing their masks and not caring about the passengers on the train. This needs to be dealt with as the numbers continue to rise

Just want to leave some feedback. I am on the 4pm train from mallow to cork and there is a junkie/homeless guy on the train. No mask, no visor, speaking loudly on his phone walking up and down the aisles. Also he sat with someone while the train was near empty. The guy he sat with seemed too shy right say anything. No one had been down to check the train. I'm a young girl travelling on her own and I felt very uncomfortable

I'm reporting this issue under antisocial behaviour as I have repeatedly complained about the attitude of customers towards wearing masks on your services and am yet to see an improvement. I am currently sitting on the 17.45 train from Westport to Heuston and a couple got on in Castlerea wearing masks and promptly slipped them down to their chins once sitting. I think it is utterly unacceptable that this behaviour is allowed and believe there should be someone on board policing mask wearing because it is clearly not working. Can you please please put people on trains checking mask wearing?? I understand there may not always be someone available to staff these trains but even some of them and even announcements on board stating the need for continued wearing once sitting would go a long way

I am travelling in coach D of the 5.25pm train from Heuston to Limerick on Sept 1st .There are three males in the carriage travelling in a group who brought alcohol on board which they are drinking more importantly none of them are wearing [masks](#).One has his mask on the table in front of him for the entire journey. An Iarnrod Eireann official walked through the carriage once and didn't challenge any one of these individuals in respect of the failure to wear masks or consuming alcohol. As a daily commuter who had travelled daily during this pandemic the failure of Iarnrod Eireann to implement it's own policy to say nothing of HSE mandatory regulations is deeply worrying

am currently onboard the 20:25 from Cork to Dublin Heuston. A gentlemen boarded the train at limerick junction and sat down in the set of seats next to me with no mask. He hasn't got one and clearly had no intention of putting one on. Not one member of staff or security are saying or doing anything about it whilst the rest of us are obeying the rules and using masks as per government guidelines. This should be enforced by people doing checks and those that do checks need to ask these people to put one on. It's nerve wracking enough using your service at a time like this not a mind individuals like this charming gentlemen who is not wearing any mask getting away with not wearing one because your staff are not enforcing it. Will definitely not be using the train again during this period and will be advising others to do the same due to a lack of enforcement of this rule

Hi my 76 year old mum got the Dublin to Wexford train and got on at the Rathdrum station at 2:55 Pm 15 /8/20 With my 3 year old daughter and arrived in Enniscorthy. she had to stand no seats available with around 10 adults drinking alcohol with no masks not one of them offered to let them have a seat She is 76 years of age no employee checking to see if they were wearing masks or tickets! I'm sorry but their should of been someone making sure an elderly person has a seat I class them as priority!!!

Having travelled 4 times on the Killarney to Dublin (return) train since it became mandatory to wear a face covering I was both shocked and horrified at the number of people who were not wearing masks, even though they had them under their chin and only put them on properly when requested to do so by rail staff. When the rail staff had passes they then took off the face masks. This was on the 11.00 train today to Cork and also on the train to Killarney from Mallow, the age group was from 18 years to 70 plus including a wheel chair user.

The complete lack of enforcement by Irish Rail is an absolute disgrace. Irish Rail is failing in there duty of care to their customers and are in my opinion complicit by this lack of enforcement to the potential spread of Covid-1

I just want to complain about the attitude of customers towards wearing masks aboard your trains and the lack of checks by staff. I am currently sitting on the 17.45 train from Westport to Dublin. The woman across from me in seat 43 in Carriage D got on in Claremorris and for the last hour has been lifting her mask on and off repeatedly to eat a salad, chocolate bar and crisps. Now I personally have no issue with an individual eating something small or taking a sip of water, however I think it is ridiculous that she has been allowed to keep her mask off for extended periods of time and no staff to police the issue. Please can you do better, we are all in this fight against Covid-19 together and it's unfair to the rest of the passengers on this carriage that she is so blatantly- in my opinion-breaking the rules. Wearing a mask is of no benefit to any others when it is hanging off her ear or sitting on her chin. Please provide staff to patrol the carriages to ensure social distancing and mask wearing is being abided by

I am shocked and appauled at the large amount of people I am seeing on the dart not wearing a face mask. I have not seen one inspector and people ae not respecting the distancing rules at all. Something needs to be done urgently.

On the Dublin to Galway train right now. Across the aisle are 4 teenagers disregarding social distancing and who removed their masks on sitting down. Opposite me a man not wearing a mask. I am 73 years old with an underlying health condition so very vulnerable. No staff member has passed through the carriage to check on compliance. This is not safe travel for anyone.

I am currently on the train from Dublin to Belfast and am shocked that there is no social distancing in place, passengers on board are not wearing masks and there are no staff to tell passengers to wear masks. It feels as if the pandemic is not being taken seriously by translink whatsoever and the health and wellbeing of their passengers is not being taken into consideration at all. Can you please tell me why there is no social distancing? Can you also tell me why there is no system in place that keeps a tally of how many people have bought tickets? Each carriage is full to the brim with people

I commute to Dublin Connolly every week day and I notice one or two passengers without face masks. This morning was pretty alarming as one young woman who sat next to me with her scooter, coughed and spluttered from Louisa Bridge to Broombridge, where she got off. Twice I had to ask her to put on her mask. She did. But that's not my job! Who is policing the mask wearing? I appreciate it is not drug use or drunken violence, but as the Covid numbers increase, surely there should be a presence to enforce the masks, rather than leave it to customers like me. Thank you

I'm currently in coach c on the 17:25 Dublin to Limerick train and there are at least 3 passengers not wearing masks, and no one checking or reminding passengers to do it

On 14:16 train Dundalk to Belfast had seat booked in carriage D; not available and no observance of social distancing in said carriage - IMHO train was overcrowded given current circumstances; also lack of mask wearing was just downright absent by over 50% of passengers - whilst I appreciate this is their personal responsibility and their are signs etc. asking for same, Iarnród Éireann staff did go through the carriage on a couple of occasions and perhaps could have asked people to put on their masks?? Experience coming back on later train (Enterprise) was a much different experience - appreciate it was a bigger train so more room and not overcrowded but the 14:16 train out of Dundalk was a disgrace

As a staff member in the Health Protection Surveillance Centre I am and have been acutely aware of the restrictions, especially involving Irish Rail as I use your services twice a day. I don't think more than a handful of passengers are aware that you are back to 100% capacity. I have seen people standing rather than take a vacant seat when the carriage has 1 person in every 2 seats. I think you should be making announcements over the tannoys, getting the drivers to re-iterate the situation and, in general, letting your customers know the change in restrictions. As the trains go back to being full after the 22nd of October, we don't want arguments (and worse) breaking out on trains when someone tries to sit down beside someone who hasn't heard the news. Please get the message out to passengers.

Nobody is enforcing mask wearing on board, putting customers at risk and making a joke of the idea that mask wearing is 'mandatory'. Staff do nothing to help. Do you expect customers to start confrontations with others? In what sense is mask wearing actually mandatory?

Myself and my husband traveled from Ceannt Station, Galway on the 11.05 train this morning. There were a group of young men not wearing masks in coach A. The inspector did ask them to put on their masks but they ignored him. As masks are mandatory I think they should have been put off the train. They are putting people lives at risk especially older people. Kind regards

Traveling home on the Pearse to Dundalk service for the second time in 18 months. First time was Monday last, not too bad - not too many people but tonight, full capacity, so many people without masks, including two guys opposite me, masks around their necks so obviously not exempt, even though I've asked them to put them on. Mandatory masks my ass. It's scary and I'm so upset - there is no monitoring - tonight I have no option but also that I won't be able to use the service in the foreseeable future - I thought I would feel safe but definitely not

On Sunday last(22/08/2021). I travelled from Dundalk to Dublin on your 10.19am train. As I had boarded the train I walked down the train looking at the carriages. Eventually just jumping on to one, I walked through different carriages looking for a seat or somewhere safe to sit/stand. It became clear very quickly that this wasn't going to be the case, the train was jammed and had definitely exceeded its 75% capacity, I normally would not complain however I have spent the best part of the past 12months fighting cancer in hospital, I have lived mostly in the hospital and isolating away from friends and family, I have had to do all this on my own. I suggested to my sisters that we take the train Because I felt it would be the safest form of public transport @ €31.58 each I expected to feel safe. I am aware its public transport but theyre was nowhere to stand and we

had to sit beside strangers some who also hadn't even the manners to wear a mask. On our return journey I cried before getting back to the station out of pure panic of not feeling safe on your train, we ended up sitting beside strangers yet again and had to get off in Drogheda. When then had to get a taxi back to Carrickmacross from there. I am very disappointed in your service and lack of concern for the public's health and following covid measures. I hope to get a response to my complaint

To whom it may concern My partner travels Monday to Friday from Galway to Limerick on the 17.50 train. In the last two weeks he has noticed that there are about only 30% of the passengers wearing a mask. As it is a legal obligation I would expect Irish Rail to implement this. I would be very grateful if you could monitor this.

There's a man on the Sligo train (just after getting on at the Longford station) who is not wearing his mask.

I was on the 11:25 service from Dublin Heuston to Galway this morning and I am frankly, appalled. The train was very clearly severely overbooked - not only was virtually every seat occupied, despite the signage in place, but every corridor and empty space was packed. I have never felt so uncomfortable - this would be bad enough under normal circumstances, but to spend the entire journey from Dublin to Galway standing up, packed like sardines during the COVID19 pandemic, with multiple people who refused to wear a mask even - the lack of care and consideration for public health is really astonishing. Please consider rectifying this so that future passengers do not feel as uncomfortable as I have on this journey

I was on train earlier and inspector wasn't satisfied with my inhaler as proof of exemption. This is proof when coverings cause me asthma attacks. I'm trying to get a replacement letter from my GP, however under this goes against GDPR to ask for such. There are many exemptions, not all visible. My inhaler proves tangible evidence. Please inform your staff of this. For those like me, who are unable to wear a mask, and as such have faced so much discrimination over the past 16 months, this has been a stressful time.

In line with GDPR I don't even have to show my inhaler, but do so as makes life easier for me. My medical information is private between me and my GP.

Many thanks

Very disappointed to take the Howth train today to find it very busy with many passengers not wearing masks. Security at the platform not wearing masks either and made no effort to enforce mask wearing. Dublin bus do not let passengers on to buses without a mask and yet Irish Rail appear happy to spread Covid with its apathy.

There are 3 young guys.. possibly in their teens, on the Westport to Dublin train. They are very loud and are breaking covid restrictions. They have been told twice to keep their masks on by the ticket inspector. They are so loud in fact, that I know their names are [REDACTED] and I think [REDACTED]. They are eating and drinking on the train, keeping their masks down. I think that the trains need to be monitored more closely and people need consequences of their actions.

Enterprise to Belfast 13.20 Mon 5th July
6 ppl on carriage wearing masks around their chins and no one policing it.
I am pregnant and high risk. This is a disgrace!
No one policing it

I am writing this email as I travel from Dublin Connolly to Belfast, which departed at 1:20 on Friday 18/06/21. I am in carriage E and I would like to report inadequate staff supervision on board, particularly on board carriage E. There are large groups of people in the carriage, all of which are drinking alcohol and blasting music from speakers. The music is so so loud and disruptive, it is impossible to even hear anything else other than the

music. I am travelling for work purposes, and I find it disgraceful that Irish Rail are not supervising the carriages, particularly for adherence to the Covid 19 guidelines and anti social behaviour. The groups are not social distancing and not wearing masks, and so not only puts themselves at risk, but all other passengers and staff members. I have never had an unsatisfactory journey with Irish Rail, and generally I would be a flexible and forgiving passenger, but I am really appalled at Irish Rail's lack of adherence to the Covid-19 guidelines. Where are staff? Who is supervising the train and ensuring guidelines are followed? Who is taking responsibility?

onboard your trains from Cork Kent to Dublin Heuston and pure shocked with the lack of security on board the trains monitoring face masks being worn.. It is by law to wear a face mask on public transport and there is no staff or security onboard monitoring this! It is not up to a customer to ask people to wear masks they are endangering those around by not wearing a mask at all! It is a year into this pandemic and as usual the same complaint being put through for no staff monitoring this! There is no ticket inspector also! This company is in serious need to update and cop on! It is a disgrace of a network to be representing Irish travel and should be ashamed!

Please note that the total number of complaints: 1768