

Restriction Order Pursuant to Section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005
General Restriction Order

Pursuant to section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005 ('the Act'), the Chair may make orders restricting the disclosure or publication of any evidence or documents given, produced or provided to the Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs ('the Inquiry'). Such restrictions may be imposed by way of an order made by the Chair during the course of the Inquiry.

In exercise of the Chair's power under section 19 of the Act, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

A. Complainants (Victims and Survivors)

1. General Provision: Further to paragraph 17 of the Protocol on Restriction Orders, Redaction and Anonymity ('the Restriction Orders Protocol'), the name, address and any other identifying information (including any still or moving image) of any individual designated by the Inquiry as a complainant in the Inquiry ('a Complainant') must not be disclosed or published in any form, whether oral, written or electronic, or in any other way, unless express permission is given by the Chair, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf. Where it is necessary for the Inquiry to refer publicly to a Complainant, it shall do so by a cipher (unique to that individual) assigned by the Inquiry.
2. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:
 - (a) where the complainant has waived their anonymity in whole or in part, whether generally or for a specified purpose in accordance with paragraph 3 below;
 - (b) by the Inquiry to law enforcement or prosecuting authorities, in accordance with the Inquiry's Memorandum of Understanding

with Operation Beaconport, in connection with a criminal investigation or prosecution; or

(c) by the Inquiry, in accordance with paragraph 21 of the Restriction Orders Protocol, where a Complainant's written statement contains criticism of another person or organisation, to the person or organisation criticised and their legal representative (where instructed), in order that they are afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the criticism. Anyone to whom information is disclosed in this way must keep it confidential and it will not be disclosed to any other person. The Inquiry will provide at least 14 days' notice if it intends to disclose the identity of the Complainant who has been granted anonymity to allow that individual an opportunity to make an application requesting that the Inquiry considers not disclosing this information.

3. Any person affected by this Restriction Order may apply in accordance with paragraph 17 of the Restriction Orders Protocol to vary or discharge it. The Inquiry may maintain an internal record of any waiver of anonymity, including its scope.

B. Anonymity Orders

4. General Provision: Save where paragraph 1 above applies, applications for anonymity must be made in accordance with the Restriction Orders Protocol. Further to paragraphs 16-21 of the Restriction Orders Protocol, where a written statement or other document disclosed or published by the Inquiry has been anonymised, the maker is granted anonymity. The name, address and any other identifying information of the witness redacted from the witness's statement or other document must not be

disclosed or published in any form, whether oral, written or electronic, or in any other way, unless express permission is given by the Chair, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf.

5. Exception: In accordance with paragraph 21 of the Restriction Orders Protocol, where a written statement contains criticism of another person or organisation, the Inquiry may disclose the identity of a witness who has been granted anonymity to the person or organisation criticised and their legal representative (where instructed), to the extent reasonably necessary to afford them a fair opportunity to respond. Anyone to whom information is disclosed in this way must keep it confidential and it will not be disclosed to any other person. The Inquiry will provide at least 14 days' notice if it intends to disclose the identity of a witness who has been granted anonymity to allow that witness an opportunity to make an application requesting that the Inquiry considers not disclosing this information.
6. Any person who has applied and been granted anonymity by the Chair and falls within this Order may apply to the Chair to vary or discharge that anonymity at any time.

C. Personal Information

7. Further to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Restriction Orders Protocol, personal information may be redacted from evidence and documents disclosed by the Inquiry where this is necessary to comply with data protection obligations, or where the Chair considers such redaction to be conducive to the Inquiry fulfilling its Terms of Reference or necessary in the public interest.

D. Criminal Convictions

8. General Provision: Where a written statement or other document given, produced or provided to the Inquiry includes or relates to criminal conviction data (including names and other details which might identify the person to whom the conviction relates), that statement or document must not be disclosed or published in a manner which identifies the person to whom the conviction relates.
9. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:
 - (a) where required by law;
 - (b) where the criminal conviction data relates to a person who is a Core Participant or a witness, and is contained in a written statement provided to, or obtained by, the Inquiry from that person, insofar as it relates to that person;
 - (c) where the person to whom the criminal conviction data principally relates consents to its publication or disclosure;
 - (d) where the criminal conviction data has already been published to a substantial section to the public;
 - (e) where the criminal conviction data relates to any investigation by the Inquiry;
 - (f) to any Recognised Legal Representative acting for the Core Participant or witness to whom the criminal conviction data principally relates.

E. Medical Records

10. General Provision: Where medical information has been provided to, or obtained by, the Inquiry, the identity of the person to whom the medical

information relates may not be published or disclosed by any person, unless express permission is given by the Chair, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf.

11. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:

- (a) where required by law;
- (b) where the medical information relates to a person who is Core Participant or a witness, and is contained in a written statement provided to, or obtained by the Inquiry from that person, insofar as it relates to that person;
- (c) where the person to whom the medical information principally relates consents to its publication or disclosure;
- (d) where the medical information has already been published to a substantial section of the public;
- (e) where the medical information relates to any investigation by the Inquiry;
- (f) to any Recognised Legal Representative acting for the Core Participant or witness to whom the medical information principally relates.

F. Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Inquiry, and Irrelevant Information

12. Information may be redacted from evidence and documents where the Chair considers it to be conducive to the Inquiry fulfilling its Terms of Reference or to be necessary in the public interest, having regard to the extent to which not imposing the restriction would cause delay or impair the efficiency or effectiveness of the Inquiry, or would otherwise result in

additional cost. This includes the redaction of wholly irrelevant information, including commercially sensitive information that is not relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

G. Rule 9 Requests, Section 21 Notices and Documents

13. General Provision: Where the Inquiry issues a request pursuant to Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 or issues a notice pursuant to section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005, the person to whom the request or notice is addressed must keep confidential any information and documents included within the request or notice, or later provided by the Inquiry in relation to that request or notice, and must not disclose that information and those documents to any other person unless express permission is given by the Chair, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf.

14. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:

(a) where required by law;

(b) for the purpose of obtaining legal or other professional advice in connection with the request or notice and, in such circumstances, it is incumbent on the person to whom the request or notice is addressed to ensure that their professional advisor(s) agree(s) to keep the information confidential before the information and documents are shared;

(c) where the information and documents have already been published to a substantial section of the public.

15. The Chair gives permission to those who have received a Rule 9 request or Section 21 notice to share (a) the fact that they have received the same and (b) the potential dates of their attendance at any oral hearing, if

applicable.

H. Warning Letters

16. General Provision: Where a warning letter is issued by the Inquiry, it may refer to, or be accompanied by, a written statement provided to the Inquiry which contains or is relevant to the criticism or proposed criticism being notified to the recipient of the letter for the purpose of obtaining their response. It may also contain a draft of the report or section(s) of the draft report. Further, it may be necessary to disclose the identity of the witness whose statement is being referred to or provided, even where that witness has been granted anonymity, in order to provide a fair opportunity for the recipient of the warning letter to respond to the criticism or proposed criticism. If the Inquiry intends to disclose the identity or statement of an anonymous witness, it will give that witness 14 days' notice to allow for an application from that witness not to disclose the information. Anyone to whom information is disclosed in any of these ways must keep it confidential and it must not be disclosed to any other person unless express permission is given by the Chair, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf, in writing.

17. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:

- (a) where required by law;
- (b) to the recipient's Recognised Legal Representative;
- (c) where the Chair has waived the confidentiality obligation in writing in accordance with any protocol for warning letters;
- (d) where the information has already been published to a substantial section of the public.

I. Redacted Evidence and Documents

18. General Provision: Where any evidence or documents that are published or disclosed by the Inquiry appear to have been redacted for whatever reason, either pursuant to a Restriction Order or to exclude information not relevant to the Inquiry's Term of Reference, no person may reveal what has been redacted to any other person by any means whatsoever unless permitted to do so by the Chair, or by the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on the Chair's behalf, in respect of any specific redaction and in writing.

19. Exceptions: nothing in this provision prevents disclosure or publication:

(a) where required by law;

(b) to the person who gave, produced or provided the evidence or document to the Inquiry, other than while giving oral evidence at an Inquiry hearing.

J. General

20. Redactions applied in accordance with this Restriction Order will be signified and overwritten with the prefix "GRO".

21. This Restriction Order remains in force for the duration of the Inquiry and at all times thereafter, unless otherwise ordered.

22. The Chair may vary or revoke this Order by making a further order during the course of the Inquiry.

23. Any breach of this Restriction Order by any means whatsoever shall be notified in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry immediately upon identification of the breach.

24. As a general exception, disclosure or publication of the above information is permitted where made by any member of the Inquiry Team to another member of the Inquiry Team as necessary and proportionate in light of the Inquiry fulfilling its terms of reference.

PENAL NOTICE

Under section 36 of the Act, where a person fails to comply with, or breaches an order made by the Inquiry, or threatens to do so, the Chair (or, after the Inquiry ends, the Minister) may certify the matter to the appropriate court. The court will deal with the matter as if the breach had occurred during proceedings before it and will have the power to imprison or fine for any breach of this Order.

Baroness Longfield

Chair

10 June 2026