



Office of the Attorney General  
State of Texas

DAN MORALES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

April 23, 1993

Mr. Leonard W. Peck, Jr.  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
Institutional Division  
P.O. Box 99  
Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099

OR93-210

Dear Mr. Peck:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Texas Open Records Act, article 6252-17a, V.T.C.S. Your request was assigned ID# 15333.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") has received a request for information relating to cell assignment policies of the department's institutional division. Specifically, the requestor seeks 31 categories of information, all but three of which you claim are excepted from required public disclosure by sections 3(a)(1), 3(a)(3), 3(a)(7), and 3(a)(11) of the Open Records Act.

To secure the protection of section 3(a)(3), a governmental body must demonstrate that requested information "relates" to a pending or reasonably anticipated judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding. Open Records Decision No. 551 (1990). In this instance you have made the requisite showing that the requested information relates to pending litigation for purposes of section 3(a)(3); the requested records may therefore be withheld.

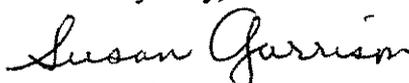
In reaching this conclusion, however, we assume that the opposing party to the litigation has not previously had access to the records at issue; absent special circumstances, once information has been obtained by all parties to the litigation, *e.g.*, through discovery or otherwise, no section 3(a)(3) interest exists with respect to that information. Open Records Decision Nos. 349, 320 (1982). If the opposing parties in the litigation have seen or had access to any of the information in these records, there would be no justification for now withholding that information from the requestor pursuant to section 3(a)(3).

We also note that because section 3(a)(3) protects only information that is relevant to the litigation, this section is inapplicable to documents that the presiding judge has ruled undiscoverable because they lack relevance to the lawsuit. Finally, the applicability of section 3(a)(3) ends once the litigation has been concluded. Attorney General Opinion

MW-575 (1982); Open Records Decision No. 350 (1982). As we resolve this issue under section 3(a)(3), we need not address the applicability of sections 3(a)(1), 3(a)(7), and 3(a)(11) at this time.

Because case law and prior published open records decisions resolve your request, we are resolving this matter with this informal letter ruling rather than with a published open records decision. If you have questions about this ruling, please refer to OR93-210.

Yours very truly,



Susan Garrison  
Assistant Attorney General  
Opinion Committee

SG/GCK/le

Ref.: ID# 15333  
ID# 15504

Enclosures: submitted documents

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