



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

April 15, 2004

Dr. D. C. Jim Dozier
Executive Director
Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
6330 U.S. Highway 290 East, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78723

OR2004-3055

Dear Dr. Dozier:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 200148.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (the "commission") received a request for the training, qualification, resignation, and termination records of four named individuals. You indicate that the commission has provided the requestor with some of the requested information. You also indicate that the commission does not maintain some of the requested information.¹ You claim, however, that the remaining requested information is excepted from disclosure pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and have reviewed the submitted information.

We note that this office recently issued Open Records Letter No. 2004-2523 (2004), which serves as a previous determination under section 552.301(a) of the Government Code for the commission with respect to the information that is at issue in this instance. In that ruling, we

¹ We note that it is implicit in several provisions of the Public Information Act (the "Act") that the Act applies only to information already in existence. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.002, .021, .227, .351. The Act does not require a governmental body to prepare new information in response to a request. *See* Attorney General Opinion H-90 (1973); *see also* Open Records Decision Nos. 572 at 1 (1990), 555 at 1-2 (1990), 452 at 2-3 (1986), 416 at 5 (1984), 342 at 3 (1982), 87 (1975); *Economic Opportunities Dev. Corp. of San Antonio v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266 (Tex. Civ. App. -San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed). A governmental body must only make a good faith effort to relate a request to information which it holds. *See* Open Records Decision No. 561 at 8 (1990).

concluded that the commission could withhold F-5 forms in response to future requests for such information under section 1701.454 of the Occupations Code where the exceptions to confidentiality enumerated in section 1701.454 do not apply. Because the law, facts, and circumstances surrounding that ruling does not appear to have changed since the issuance of that ruling, we conclude that the commission may rely on Open Records Letter No. 2004-2523 (2004) in withholding the information that is at issue in this instance. *See* Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) (governmental body may rely on previous determination when elements of law, fact, and circumstances have not changed, decision concludes specific, clearly delineated category of information is excepted, and governmental body is explicitly informed it need not seek a decision from this office to withhold information in response to future requests).

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Texas Building and Procurement Commission at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. We note that a third party may challenge this ruling by filing suit seeking to withhold information from a requestor. Gov't Code § 552.325. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,



Ronald J. Bounds
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RJB/lmt

Ref: ID# 200148

Enc. Submitted document

c: Mr. Ruben Gonzalez, P.C.
1701 River Run, Suite 502
Fort Worth, Texas 76107
(w/o enclosures)