



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 4, 2014

Ms. Robin L. Whitney
Assistant General Counsel
TDCJ - Office of the General Counsel
P.O. Box 4004
Huntsville, Texas 77342-4004

OR2014-15525

Dear Ms. Whitney:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 535291.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for the requestor's and the selected applicant's interview questions and answers for a specified position. You state you will release some information to the requestor. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.122 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note some of the submitted information, which we have marked, is not responsive to the instant request because it does not consist of the requestor's or the selected applicant's interview questions or answers. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request and the department is not required to release such information in response to this request.

Section 552.122 of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure "[a] test item developed by a . . . governmental body[.]" Gov't Code § 552.122(b). In Open Records Decision No. 626 (1994), this office determined the term "test item" in section 552.122 includes "any standard means by which an individual's or group's knowledge or ability in a particular area is evaluated," but does not encompass evaluations of an employee's overall job performance or suitability. ORD 626 at 6. The question of whether specific information

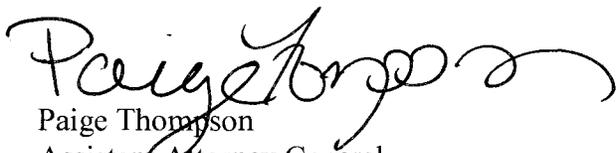
falls within the scope of section 552.122(b) must be determined on a case-by-case basis. *Id.* Traditionally, this office has applied section 552.122 where release of “test items” might compromise the effectiveness of future examinations. *Id.* at 4-5; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 118 (1976).

You state the submitted questions and answers “are intended to display the technical expertise of the applicant.” You contend release of the information at issue would “compromise the effectiveness of future examinations” because the department reuses similar interview questions. Upon review, we conclude the submitted interview questions qualify as test items under section 552.122(b). We also find release of the model answers and the applicants’ responses to these questions would tend to reveal the questions themselves. Therefore, the department may withhold the interview questions and the corresponding model answers and applicants’ responses under section 552.122(b) of the Government Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information 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 information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Paige Thompson
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

PT/dls

Ref: ID# 535291

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)