



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 15, 2016

Mr. Kristen Worman
Deputy General Counsel
Texas Real Estate Commission
P.O. Box 12188
Austin, Texas 78711-2188

OR2016-18383

Dear Ms. Worman:

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# 622607 (TREC ID# 20160601.2).

The Texas Real Estate Commission (the "commission") received a request for all statements and responses made by named individuals concerning a specified complaint. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the requestor seeks only statements and responses made by named individuals concerning a specified complaint. You have submitted documents that contain information beyond these specific pieces of information. Thus, the portions of the submitted documents that do not consist of the information requested are not responsive to the present request. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request and the commission is not required to release that information in response to the request.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses information made confidential by other statutes, including section 1101.2051 of the Occupations Code, which provides the following:

(a) Information or material, including an investigation file, is confidential and not subject to disclosure under [the Act], or any other means of legal compulsion for release, including disclosure, discovery, or subpoena, if the information or material is prepared or compiled by the commission in connection with a complaint, investigation, or audit of any person subject to the jurisdiction of the commission.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), information or material prepared or compiled by the commission in connection with a complaint, investigation, or audit may be disclosed:

(1) to the respondent of the complaint;

(2) to a person that is the subject of an audit;

(3) to a person providing a service to the commission, an expert or other witness, or an investigator, if the information is necessary for preparation for, or a presentation in, a disciplinary proceeding against an applicant or license holder, or a subsequent trial or appeal taken from a disciplinary proceeding;

(4) to an entity in another jurisdiction that licenses, registers, credentials, or disciplines any person subject to the jurisdiction of the commission;

(5) to a law enforcement agency;

(6) to the State Office of Administrative Hearings; or

(7) to the commission, or a panel of the commission, for use during any proceeding conducted by the State Office of Administrative Hearings or in a subsequent trial or appeal of a commission action or order.

...

(e) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), on the dismissal or final resolution of a complaint, investigation, or audit, information or materials prepared or compiled by the commission in connection with the complaint, investigation, or audit, including a completed audit report or a final order of the commission, is subject to disclosure under Chapter 321 [of the Government Code or the Act].

Occ. Code § 1101.2051(a)-(b), (e). You inform us the submitted responsive information was prepared or compiled by the commission in conjunction with the investigation of the specified complaint. You state the information at issue reveals the persons under investigation are a sales agent and a broker who are subject to the jurisdiction of the commission. *See id.* § 1101.002(1), (7) (defining “broker” and “sales agent” for purposes of chapter 1101 of the Occupations Code); *see also id.* § 1101.151(a)(1) (requiring the commission to administer chapters 1101 and 1102). Thus, we determine the information at issue is subject to section 1101.2051. You inform us the commission’s investigation in this matter remains ongoing, and the commission has not dismissed the complaint at issue or entered a final order in this matter; thus, the information at issue does not fall under section 1101.2051(e). Further, we find the requestor is not entitled to receive this information under section 1101.2051(b). Accordingly, we conclude the commission must withhold the submitted responsive information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1101.2051(a) of the Occupations 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,



Ian Lancaster
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

IML/akg

Ref: ID# 622607

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)