



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 28, 2017

Ms. Kelli K. Colbert
Assistant City Attorney
City of Beaumont
P.O. Box 3827
Beaumont, Texas 77704-3827

OR2017-06365

Dear Ms. Colbert:

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# 651137 (ORR No. 01-17).

The Beaumont Municipal Court (the "court") received a request for the names, addresses, telephone numbers, occupations, and places of employment for the jury members in specific trials. 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.

The Act is applicable to information "written, produced, collected, assembled, or maintained under a law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by a governmental body." Gov't Code § 552.002(a)(1). However, the Act's definition of "governmental body" "does not include the judiciary." *Id.* § 552.003(1)(B). Information "collected, assembled, or maintained by or for the judiciary" is not subject to the Act but is instead "governed by rules adopted by the Supreme Court of Texas or by other applicable laws and rules." *Id.* § 552.0035(a); *cf.* Open Records Decision No. 131 (1976) (applying statutory predecessor to judiciary exclusion under Gov't Code § 552.003(1)(B) prior to enactment of Gov't Code § 552.0035). Therefore, the Act neither authorizes information held by the judiciary to be withheld, nor does it require such information be disclosed. *See* Open Records Decision No. 25 (1974). The instant request was addressed to the court and seeks judicial records collected, assembled, or maintained by the court. Accordingly, we

conclude the requested information, which consists of records of the judiciary, is not subject to the Act and need not be released in response to this request for information.¹

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,



Emily Kunst
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EK/nmd

Ref: ID# 651137

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹We note records of the judiciary may be public under other sources of law. *See* Gov't Code § 29.007(d)(4) (complaints filed with municipal court clerk); *id.* § 29.007(f) (municipal court clerks shall perform duties prescribed by law for county court clerk); Local Gov't Code § 191.006 (records belonging to office of county clerk shall be open to public unless access restricted by law or court order); *see also Star-Telegram, Inc. v. Walker*, 834 S.W.2d 54, 57 (Tex. 1992) (documents filed with courts are generally considered to be public and must be released); Attorney General Opinions DM-166 at 2-3 (1992) (public has general right to inspect and copy judicial records), H-826 (1976); Open Records Decision No. 25 (1974). As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure.