



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 20, 2019

Ms. Tangerla Williams
Temporary Senior Assistant General Counsel
Dallas Area Rapid Transit
P.O. Box 660163
Dallas, Texas 75266-0163

OR2019-26394

Dear Ms. Williams:

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# 787218 (ORR# W004056-062019).

Dallas Area Rapid Transit ("DART") received a request for (1) a named individual's personnel file; (2) a specified incident report; and (3) a specified report from a specified year.¹ You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.103, 552.104, 552.105, 552.107, 552.108, 552.110, 552.111, and 552.122 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim.

Section 552.301 of the Government Code prescribes the procedures a governmental body must follow in asking this office to decide whether requested information is excepted from public disclosure. Pursuant to section 552.301(e), a governmental body is required to submit to this office within fifteen business days of receiving an open records request (1) written comments stating the reasons why the claimed exceptions apply that would allow the information to be withheld, (2) a copy of the written request for information, (3) a signed statement or sufficient evidence showing the date the governmental body received the written request, and (4) a copy of the specific information requested or representative samples, labeled to indicate which exceptions apply to which parts of the documents. Gov't

¹ You state DART sought and received clarification of the request. See Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); see also *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of unclear or overbroad request for public information, ten-day period to request attorney general ruling is measured from date request is clarified or narrowed).

Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A)-(D). You state DART received the clarified request for information on July 1, 2019. As of the date of this letter, you have not submitted to this office written comments stating the reasons why the claimed exceptions apply, or a copy or representative sample of the information requested. Accordingly, we conclude DART failed to comply with the requirements of section 552.301 of the Government Code.

Pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code, a governmental body's failure to comply with the procedural requirements of section 552.301 results in the legal presumption that the requested information is public and must be released unless there is a compelling reason to withhold the information from disclosure. *See id.* § 552.302; *Simmons v. Kuzmich*, 166 S.W.3d 342, 350 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2005, no pet.); *Hancock v. State Bd. of Ins.*, 797 S.W.2d 379, 381 (Tex. App.—Austin 1990, no writ). Although DART raises exceptions to disclosure, because you have not submitted the requested information for our review, we have no basis for finding any of the information is excepted from disclosure. Thus, we have no choice but to order the requested information released pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code. If you believe the information may not lawfully be released, you must challenge this ruling in court pursuant to section 552.324 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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Kimbell Kesling
Attorney
Open Records Division

KK/eb

Ref: ID# 787218

c: Requestor