

## CHAPTER 741

## H.B. No. 1825

An Act relating to the application of the open records law to information relating to criminal litigation to which a governmental entity is a party and to records maintained and information collected by a prosecutor's office.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:*

**SECTION 1.** Subsection (a), Section 3, Chapter 424, Acts of the 63rd Legislature, Regular Session, 1973 (Article 6252-17a, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes), is amended to read as follows:

(a) All information collected, assembled, or maintained by governmental bodies pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business is public information and available to the public during normal business hours of any governmental body, with the following exceptions only:

(1) information deemed confidential by law, either Constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision;

(2) information in personnel files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; provided, however, that all information in personnel files of an individual employee within a governmental body is to be made available to that individual employee or his designated representative as is public information under this Act;

(3) information relating to litigation of a criminal or civil nature and settlement negotiations, to which the state or political subdivision is, or may be, a party, or to which an officer or employee of the state or political subdivision, as a consequence of his office or employment, is or may be a party, that the attorney general or the respective attorneys of the various political subdivisions has determined should be withheld from public inspection;

(4) information which, if released, would give advantage to competitors or bidders;

(5) information pertaining to the location of real or personal property for public purposes prior to public announcement of the project, and information pertaining to appraisals or purchase price of real or personal property for public purposes prior to the formal award of contracts therefor;

(6) drafts and working papers involved in the preparation of proposed legislation;

(7) matters in which the duty of the Attorney General of Texas or an attorney of a political subdivision, to his client, pursuant to the Rules and Canons of Ethics of the State Bar of Texas are prohibited from disclosure, or which by order of a court are prohibited from disclosure;

(8) records of law enforcement agencies *and prosecutors* that deal with the detection, [and] investigation, *and prosecution* of crime and the internal records and notations of such law enforcement agencies *and prosecutors* which are maintained for internal use in matters relating to law enforcement *and prosecution*;

(9) private correspondence and communications of an elected office holder relating to matters the disclosure of which would constitute an invasion of privacy;

(10) trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential by statute or judicial decision;

(11) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than one in litigation with the agency;

(12) information contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions, and/or securities, as that term is defined in the Texas Securities Act;

(13) geological and geophysical information and data including maps concerning wells, except information filed in connection with an application or proceeding before any agency;

(14) student records at educational institutions funded wholly, or in part, by state revenue; but such records shall be made available upon request of educational institution personnel, the student involved, that student's parent, legal guardian, or spouse or a person conducting a child abuse investigation required by Section 34.05, Family Code;

(15) birth and death records maintained by the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the State of Texas;

(16) the audit working papers of the State Auditor;

(17) the home addresses and home telephone numbers of peace officers as defined by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1965, as amended, or by Section 51.212, Texas Education Code; and

(18) information contained on or derived from triplicate prescription forms filed with the Department of Public Safety pursuant to Section 3.09 of the Texas Controlled Substances Act, as amended (Article 4476-15, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes).

**SECTION 2.** Section 3, Chapter 424, Acts of the 63rd Legislature, Regular Session, 1973 (Article 6252-17a, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes), is amended by adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

*(e) For purposes of Subsection (a)(3) of this section, the state or a political subdivision is considered to be a party to litigation of a criminal nature until the applicable statute of limitations has expired or until the defendant has exhausted all appellate and postconviction remedies in state and federal court.*

**SECTION 3.** The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended, and that this Act take effect and be in force from and after its passage, and it is so enacted.

Passed by the House on May 17, 1985, by a non-record vote; House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1825 on May 27, 1985, by a non-record vote; passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 27, 1985, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1.

Approved: June 14, 1985

Effective: August 26, 1985