



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 7, 2015

Ms. Lauren Dahlstein
Staff Attorney
State Board of Dental Examiners
333 Guadalupe, Tower 3, Suite 800
Austin, Texas 78701-3942

OR2015-20982

Dear Ms. Dahlstein:

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# 582325.

The State Board of Dental Examiners (the "board") received a request for five categories of information pertaining to a named dentist. You state the board does not possess some of the requested information.¹ You state the board will release some of the requested information, including the agreed settlement order that issued a sanction against the license of the named dentist. 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 representative sample of information.²

¹The Act does not require a governmental body to release information that did not exist when a request for information was received or to prepare new information in response to a request. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266, 267-68 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

²We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from 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 254.006 of the Occupations Code, which states:

(a) Except as provided by this section, the investigation files and other records of the board are public records and open to public inspection at reasonable times.

(b) Investigation files and other records are confidential, except the board shall inform the license holder of the specific allegations against the license holder. The board may share investigation files and other records with another state regulatory agency or a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

(c) The exception from public disclosure of investigation files and records provided by this section does not apply to the disclosure of a disciplinary action of the board, including:

- (1) the revocation or suspension of a license;
- (2) the imposition of a fine on a license holder;
- (3) the placement on probation with conditions of a license holder whose license has been suspended;
- (4) the reprimand of a license holder; or
- (5) the issuance of a warning letter to a license holder.

Occ. Code § 254.006. You state the submitted information in Exhibit 2 consists of an investigation file of the board that was created in response to a complaint filed against a dentist licensed by the board. You explain the information at issue pertains to a disciplinary action of the board listed in subsection 254.006(c). *Id.* § 254.006(c). Based on your representations and our review of the information at issue, we find the submitted information in Exhibit 2 is confidential under section 254.006(b) of the Occupations Code. Therefore, the board must withhold the information in Exhibit 2 under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 254.006(b) 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,



Lee Seidlits
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CLS/som

Ref: ID# 582325

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)