

# THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

JUNE 2015



**Glenn Hegar**

Texas Comptroller of  
Public Accounts

## OPEN GOVERNMENT IS THE HEARTBEAT OF DEMOCRACY

Because open government is integral to a democracy, the Comptroller's office has worked hard to improve the efficiency of its system of handling public information requests. Anyone who seeks public information from this agency can count on a prompt and accurate response.

### HOW TO GET PUBLIC INFORMATION FROM THE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

#### BY OUR WEBSITE

The Comptroller's website provides free information. Access the Comptroller's website via the Internet at: [Comptroller.Texas.Gov](http://Comptroller.Texas.Gov)

The Comptroller's website provides information such as:

- Comptroller Reports
- Tax Information
- Corporate Officers and Directors
- State Spending and Revenue Numbers
- State and Local Economic Data
- Links to Other Government Sites

#### IN WRITING

Please send written requests for public information to:

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts  
Open Records  
Post Office Box 13528  
Austin, Texas 78711-3528

#### BY FAX

512-475-1610

#### BY EMAIL

[open.records@cpa.texas.gov](mailto:open.records@cpa.texas.gov)

#### COMPTROLLER'S GUIDELINES FOR CHARGES

The Attorney General's Office sets the fees that agencies may charge for responding to public information requests. There is no fee for 50 pages or fewer of standard paper copies.

The following requestors generally will not be charged a fee:

- Taxpayers or their authorized representatives who need information on their own accounts
- Texas state agencies and local governments
- Educational institutions in Texas

The Comptroller will send notification of any charges that will exceed \$40.

#### PUBLIC INFORMATION ON TAXPAYERS

Under the Texas Public Information Act, all information that is in the government's possession is public, unless it falls within one of the Act's specific exceptions. Certain information about a taxpayer's account with the Comptroller is public information and must be released to anyone who requests it. The following is a list of frequently requested public items of information about Texas taxpayers:

- Taxpayer name
- Taxpayer address
- Taxpayer telephone number
- Business code (NAICS and SIC)
- Corporate charter number/  
Certificate of Authority number
- Date on which a corporation is chartered
- Date on which corporate privileges were forfeited (franchise tax)
- Date of first taxable sale (sales tax)
- Entity name
- Entity address
- Entity business address
- Entity business location

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts is **committed** to making records **open and accessible** to the public, in full accordance with the Texas Public Information Act.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[Comptroller.Texas.Gov](http://Comptroller.Texas.Gov).

RECEIVE TAX HELP AT  
[comptroller.texas.gov/taxhelp](http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxhelp).

This publication is intended as a general guide and not as a comprehensive resource on the subjects covered. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

# THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The Texas Legislature has enacted several **statutes** that make certain information about taxpayers **confidential**.

- Entity telephone number
- Type of business entity – sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, etc.
- Names, titles, mailing addresses of owners, officers, or directors
- Outlet locations
- Permit(s) issued and date issued
- Public Information Report
- Registered agent's name and address (franchise tax)
- Status of account – active, inactive, current, delinquent
- Whether tax return was filed on time
- Whether and when a taxpayer has been audited
- Whether an audit resulted in a deficiency or refund
- Whether corporate charter has been revoked

## CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ON TAXPAYERS

The Texas Legislature has enacted several statutes that make certain information about taxpayers confidential. Reports filed for certain taxes and fees are confidential by statute. For example, sales tax and franchise tax reports filed by taxpayers are generally confidential. Also, information that the Comptroller has obtained during an audit of a taxpayer is confidential. Audit information is confidential for all taxes and fees that the Comptroller collects.

Information made confidential by statute, such as a sales tax return, may not be released to the public unless the Comptroller receives the taxpayer's express, written permission. The Comptroller will provide confidential information to a taxpayer's authorized representative (attorney or accountant), provided that the taxpayer gives express, written permission to release the information to that representative.

This publication is intended as a general guide and not as a comprehensive resource on the subjects covered. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

## WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

If you have questions or need information, contact us:

For more information, visit our website  
**Comptroller.Texas.Gov**

Receive tax help at  
**comptroller.texas.gov/taxhelp**

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts  
111 East 17th Street  
Austin, Texas 78711-1440



Sign up to receive email updates on the Comptroller topics of your choice at [comptroller.texas.gov/subscribe](http://comptroller.texas.gov/subscribe).

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability in employment or in the provision of any services, programs or activities.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document may be requested in alternative formats by calling the appropriate toll-free number listed or by sending a fax to 512-475-0900.

**1-800-252-5555**  
911 Emergency Service/  
Equalization Surcharge  
Automotive Oil Fee  
Battery Fee  
Boat and Boat Motor Sales Tax  
Customs Broker  
Fireworks Tax  
Mixed Beverage Taxes  
Off-Road, Heavy-Duty Diesel  
Equipment Surcharge  
Oyster Fee  
Sales and Use Taxes

**1-800-531-5441**  
Cement Tax  
Inheritance Tax  
Local Revenue  
Miscellaneous Gross Receipts Taxes  
Oil Well Servicing Tax  
Sulphur Tax

**1-800-531-5441, ext. 3-3630**  
WebFile Help

**1-800-252-1381**  
Bank Franchise  
Franchise Tax

**1-800-252-7875**  
Spanish  
**1-800-531-1441**  
Fax on Demand (Most frequently requested  
Sales and Franchise tax forms)

**1-800-252-1382**  
Clean Vehicle Incentive Program  
Manufactured Housing Tax  
Motor Vehicle Sales Surcharge,  
Rental and Seller Financed Sales Tax  
Motor Vehicle Registration Surcharge

**1-800-252-1383**  
Fuels Tax  
IFTA  
LG Decals  
Petroleum Products Delivery Fee  
School Fund Benefit Fee

**1-800-252-1384**  
Coastal Protection  
Crude Oil Production Tax  
Natural Gas Production Tax

**1-800-252-1387**  
Insurance Tax

**1-800-252-1385**  
Coin-Operated Machines Tax  
Hotel Occupancy Tax  
**1-800-252-1386**  
Account Status  
Officer and Director Information

**1-800-862-2260**  
Cigarette and Tobacco

**1-888-4-FILING (1-888-434-5464)**  
TELEFILE: To File by Phone

**1-800-252-1389**  
GETPUB: To Order Forms and Publications

**1-800-654-FIND (1-800-654-3463)**  
Treasury Find

**1-800-321-2274**  
Unclaimed Property Claimants  
Unclaimed Property Holders  
Unclaimed Property Name Searches  
512-463-3120 in Austin

**1-877-44RATE4 (1-877-447-2834)**  
Interest Rate