

Restrictions on Open Government and Public Information During COVID-19

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The COVID-19 pandemic has left government agencies scrambling to modify ordinary procedures aimed at ensuring the transparency of government in light of federal, state and local mandates to limit face-to-face contact. Almost without exception, these “temporary” measures have had the effect of reducing, or at least making more difficult, public access to government information. All states have public information and open meetings law, and throughout the pandemic, most, including Texas, have temporarily altered those laws in response to COVID-19. Each state’s open government laws are different, and so the temporary changes to those laws varies, but the changes that were seen in Texas, discussed below, illustrate the kinds of emergency measures that have been implemented across the country.

In addition, as the pandemic has progressed, the public has become more interested in obtaining information from governmental bodies about COVID-19 itself, in an effort to better understand and protect against the virus. There has been a corresponding rise in litigation related to the public’s access to COVID-19 data, which likely will continue after the pandemic subsides.

Read the full article [here](#).