

RCW 43.101.400 Confidentiality of records—Public database. (1)

Except as provided under subsection (2) of this section, all files, papers, and other information obtained by the commission as part of an initial background investigation pursuant to RCW 43.101.095 (2) and (4) are confidential and exempt from public disclosure. Such records are not subject to public disclosure, subpoena, or discovery proceedings in any civil action, except as provided in RCW 43.101.380(6) or which become part of the record in a suspension or decertification matter.

(2) Records which are otherwise confidential and exempt under subsection (1) of this section may be reviewed and copied: (a) By the officer involved or the officer's counsel or authorized representative, who may review the officer's file and may submit any additional exculpatory or explanatory evidence, statements, or other information, any of which must be included in the file; (b) by a duly authorized representative of (i) the agency of termination, or (ii) a current employing law enforcement or corrections agency, which may review and copy its employee-officer's file; or (c) by a representative of or investigator for the commission.

(3) Records which are otherwise confidential and exempt under subsection (1) of this section may also be inspected at the offices of the commission by a duly authorized representative of a law enforcement or corrections agency considering an application for employment by a person who is the subject of a record. A copy of records which are otherwise confidential and exempt under subsection (1) of this section may later be obtained by an agency after it hires the applicant. In all other cases under this subsection, the agency may not obtain a copy of the record.

(4) The commission shall maintain a database that is publicly searchable, machine readable, and exportable, and accompanied by a complete, plain-language data dictionary describing the names of officers and employing agencies, all conduct investigated, certifications denied, notices and accompanying information provided by law enforcement or correctional agencies, including the reasons for separation from the agency, decertification or suspension actions pursued, and final disposition and the reasons therefor for at least 30 years after final disposition of each incident. The dates for each material step of the process must be included. Any decertification must be reported to the national decertification index.

(5) Every individual, legal entity, and agency of federal, state, or local government is immune from civil liability, whether direct or derivative, for providing information to the commission in good faith. [2021 c 323 § 21; 2020 c 119 § 12; 2001 c 167 § 12.]