

Under the RTKL, an attestation made under the penalty of perjury may serve as competent evidence to sustain an agency's burden of proof. *See Sherry v. Radnor Twp. Sch. Dist.*, 20 A.3d 515, 520-21 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2011); *Moore v. Office of Open Records*, 992 A.2d 907, 909 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2010). In the absence of any competent evidence that the OOR acted in bad faith or that the records exist, "the averments in [the attestation] should be accepted as true." *McGowan v. Pa. Dep't of Env'tl. Prot.*, 103 A.3d 374, 382-83 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2014) (citing *Office of the Governor v. Scolforo*, 65 A.3d 1095, 1103 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)). Based upon the evidence provided, therefore, the OOR has established that the requested records do not exist within its possession, custody or control. *See* 65 P.S. § 67.705; *Hodges v. Pa. Dep't of Health*, 29 A.3d 1190, 1192 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2011).

For the foregoing reasons, the Requester's appeal is **denied**, and the OOR is not required to take any further action. This Final Determination is binding on all parties. Within thirty days of the mailing date of this Final Determination, any party may appeal to the Commonwealth Court. 65 P.S. § 67.1301(a). All parties must be served with notice of the appeal. The Appeals Officer also shall be served notice and have an opportunity to respond according to court rules as per Section 1303 of the RTKL. However, as the quasi-judicial tribunal adjudicating this matter, the Appeals Officer is not a proper party to any appeal and should not be named as a party.⁴ This Final Determination shall be placed on the OOR website at: <http://openrecords.pa.gov>.

FINAL DETERMINATION ISSUED AND MAILED: 27 July 2016

/s/ Joshua T. Young

JOSHUA T. YOUNG, ESQ.
APPEALS OFFICER

Sent to: Joseph Rhone, BM-7198;
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⁴ *Padgett v. Pa. State Police*, 73 A.3d 644, 648 n.5 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013).