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Key RTKL Opinions: Supreme Court & Commonwealth Court

Final update: November 18, 2019

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Caption</u>	<u>Date</u>
The term "financial record" in the	City of Harrisburg v. Prince, 2019 Pa.	November 12,
RTKL is broadly defined and	LEXIS 6278	2019
includes past precedential decisions		
under the Right To Know Act.		
Where a request seeks information	Kutztown Univ. of Pa. v. Bollinger,	September 13,
rather than any specific document, it	2019 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 521	2019
is moot when that information is		
provided.		
Under FERPA, OOR must	West Chester Univ. of Pa. v.	July 24, 2019
determine if a record (1) relates to a	Rodriguez, 2019 Pa. Commw. LEXIS	
student other than the Requester	690	
and (2) is maintained in a specific		
way		7 1 17 2010
Where both the requester and	Pa. Liquor Control Bd. v. Beh, 2019	July 17, 2019
applicants for licenses had valid	Pa. Commw. LEXIS 660	
constitutional interests under <i>PSEA</i> ,		
redaction was appropriate		I 1 11 2010
Judicial notice; the security	Crocco v. Pa. Dep't of Health, 2019	July 11, 2019
exceptions in the RTKL may be	Pa. Commw. LEXIS 649	
proven as to groups of people		
through testimony and statistical information		
	Mission Pa., LLC v. McKelvey, 2019	June 4, 2019
This case concerns a variety of issues surrounding access to	Pa. Commw. LEXIS 528	June 4, 2019
medical marijuana applications	Fa. Collilliw. LEAIS 526	
A corporate entity cannot be an	Cal. Univ. of Pa. v. Bradshaw, 2019	May 31, 2019
"individual" for the purposes of	Pa. Commw. LEXIS 496	May 31, 2017
(b)(13)	Tu. Commw. ELizis 190	
An agency is entitled to a literal	Equity Forward v. Dep't of Human	May 17, 2019
interpretation of a Request; analysis	Servs., 2019 Pa. Commw. Unpub.	171ay 17, 2019
of Section 506(d) issues	LEXIS 292	
To determine whether a volunteer	Pysher v. Clinton Twp. Volunteer Fire	May 8, 2019
fire department is an agency, the	<u>Co.</u> , 209 A.3d 1116	
OOR must analyze the		
department's relationship with local		
governments		

Where an agency hires consultants for the benefit of their expertise, communications with those consultants may be internal for the purposes of (b)(10)	Finnerty v. Pa. Dep't of Cmty. & Econ. Dev., 208 A.3d 178	April 25, 2019
The proprietary formulas used by a contractor in road projects may be withheld under (b)(11) where the third party can prove each element	Crouthamel v. Pa. Dep't of Transportation, 207 A.3d 432	April 5, 2019
Specific records must be provided under the Board's regulation regardless of the form in which they exist	Madison v. Pa. Bd. of Prob. & Parole, 206 A.3d 683	March 27, 2019
The state constitutional right to privacy applies to the counties of residence of public employees	Governor's Office of Admin. v. Campbell, 2019 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 104	January 24, 2019
Security camera footage must be created primarily to document an investigation to be exempt under (b)(17)	Borough of Pottstown v. Suber- Aponte, 202 A.3d 173	January 8, 2019
Declaratory judgments are inappropriate where ordinary appeal will do, OOR may order <i>in camera</i> review upon its own motion	Cty. of Berks v. Pa. Office of Open Records, 2019 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 3	January 3, 2019
Agencies are responsible for properly mailing responsive records, but not for the requester's receipt of those records	Brown v. Pa. Dep't of Health, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 684	December 21, 2018
OOR's management of deadlines, nature of mandatory deadlines under the RTKL	Vu v. Pa. Bd. of Prob. & Parole, 2018 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 740	December 13, 2018
The application of FERPA under the RTKL and the test that should be used	Cent. Dauphin Sch. Dist. v. Hawkins, 2018 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 725	December 10, 2018
Effect of contemporary changes to regulation on appeals, regulatory interpretation, (b)(1)(ii)	Pa. Dep't of Health v. McKelvey, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 520	September 27, 2018
Definition of "education records" under FERPA, issues not raised may be waived on appeal	Easton Area Sch. Dist. v. Miller, 2018 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 320	July 20, 2018
(b)(1)(ii), heightened risk of harm via retaliation for inmates	Brown v. Dep't of State, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 342	June 25, 2018

(b)(2), security footage for municipal buildings, the content of a video controls application of	Gregg Twp. v. Grove, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 343	June 25, 2018
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Evidentiary burden for (b)(2), use of <i>in camera</i> where the contents of a document are irrelevant	Pa. State Police v. ACLU, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 275	May 18, 2018
Definition of "financial record" under RTKL, (b)(13)	Harrisburg v. Prince, 2018 Pa. Commw. Lexis 162	May 10, 2018
Identity of requester and reason for request may be considered when construing protective orders	Barosh v. City of Philadelphia, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 259	May 9, 2018
(b)(16), PSP lab reports	Soto v. Pa. State Police, 2018 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 246	May 7, 2018
Imposition of a \$1,500 penalty for agency's "noncompliance throughout the RTKL process."	Uniontown Newspapers, Inc. v. Pa. Dep't of Corr., 185 A.3d 1161 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2015)	March 23, 2018
Dual jurisdiction of DA's Offices and OOR, (b)(16), jailhouse videos, speculative harms	California Borough v. Rothey, 185 A.3d 456	April 4, 2018
Attorney-client privilege, waiver, standing to assert claims	<u>Pa. PUC v. Sunrise Energy, LLC.,</u> 177 A.3d 438 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2018)	January 12, 2018
Sufficiency of affidavit demonstrating past fees owed to agency	Brown v. Pa. Dep't of Corr., 2017 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 920	December 15, 2017
Right to privacy, balancing test, severability of confidential data	Chester Hous. Auth. v. Polaha, 173 A.3d 1240 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2017)	November 21, 2017
Property addresses in property tax assessment records public, right to privacy	Butler Area Sch. Dist. v. Pennsylvanians for Union Reform, 172 A.3d 1173 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2017)	November 2, 2017
RTKL fees, prior assessments, Prison Litigation Reform Act	Brown v. Pa. Dep't of Corr., 2017 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 825	October 31, 2017
Scope of (b)(17), Inspector General records, sufficiency of affidavits	Brown v. Office of Inspector Gen., 2017 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 820	October 27, 2017
Scope of requests, requests that change during appeals	McKelvey v. Office of the AG, 2017 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 808	October 13, 2017

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708(b)(10), disclosure of material 'related to' (b)(10), Attorney-client privilege / Attorney work-product privilege	Dep't of Corr. v. Fiorillo, 2017 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 305	May 1, 2017
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A request for home addresses is subject to the constitutional balancing test	State Employees Ret. Sys. v. Campbell, 2017 Pa. Commw. LEXIS 436	March 3, 2017
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708(b)(10); no official adjudication or decision required-must merely propose or contemplate a course of action; purely factual information may be exempt if it discloses the deliberative process	McGowan v. Pa. Department of Environmental Protection, 103 A.3d 374 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2014)	September 11, 2014
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Records do not exist. Sufficiency of affidavit.	Reaves v. Pa. Board of Probation and Parole, No. 393 C.D. 2013, 2013 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	November 15, 2013
Standing to appeal; definition of Requester; attorney making request on behalf of client; records of an agency are those that document a transaction or activity of the responding agency, not any agency.	Meguerian v. Office of the AG, 2013 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 828 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	November 14, 2013
Immunity Agreement is not <i>per se</i> an investigative record; Section 708(b)(16)	Coley v. Phila. DA's Office, 77 A.3d 694 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	October 7, 2013
Attorney fees	Staub v. City of Wilkes-Barre, 2013 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 739 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	October 3, 2013
Scope and standard of review of OOR final determinations; presumption of openness	Bowling v. Office of Open Records, 75 A.3d 453 (Pa. 2013)	September 13, 2013
Disruptive requests; application of Rules of Civil Procedure to an appeal under the RTKL	Borough of West Easton v. Mezzacappa, 74 A.3d 417 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	September 6, 2013
Inmate; policies regarding treatment of inguinal hernias; public safety; Section 708(b)(2)	Wishnefsky v. Dep't of Corr., No. 2319 C.D. 2012, 2013 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 652	August 23, 2013
Deemed denial. An agency does not waive the ability to raise exemptions on appeal by failing to respond to a RTK request.	McClintock v. Coatesville Area SD 74 A.3d 378 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	August 9, 2013

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Jurisdiction; certain records	<u>Bagwell v. PDE</u> , 76 A.3d 81 (Pa.	July 19, 2013
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"records" subject to public access		
because the records were received		
by a Commonwealth agency to		
enable it to perform its statutory		
governmental function		
Protective Services Act	Danvers v. Dep't of Aging, No. 2324	July 18, 2013
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Section 506(d); directly relates;	Municipality of Monroeville v. Drack	July 16, 2013
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	Commw. Ct. July 11, 2013)	
708(b)(1); 708(b)(2); inmate;	Carey v. DOC, 2013 Pa. Commw.	July 3, 2013
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	to Jan 24, 2013 opinion)	
Records do not exist; mandamus	Barros v. City of Allentown and	July 3, 2013
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Section 1101 and obligation to	Barnett v. DPW, 71 A.3d 399 (Pa.	June 12, 2013
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to a large number of additional		
reasons for denial; remand		
Requester does not owe fees for a	Borough of West Easton v.	June 12, 2013
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then subsequently granted.	Unpub. LEXIS 449 (Pa. Commw. Ct.	
	2013)	
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Requesters must address agency	Padgett v. Pennsylvania State Police,	May 22, 2013
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Home addresses; government-	Office of the Lt. Gov. v. Mohn, 67	April 24, 2013
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Sentencing orders; RTKL not	Whitaker v. Dept. of Corrections, No.	March 8, 2013
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Name, address, date of birth and social security number of each person issued a driver's license or non-driver photo identification card are confidential under Section 6114 the Vehicle Code	Advancement Project and Marian Schneider v. Pa. Dept. of Transportation, 60 A.3d 891 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	January 14, 2013
"Directly related" aspect of 506(d); dates of birth are not categorically exempt; Section 708(b)(6) waiver	Allegheny County and A Second Chance, Inc. v. Parsons and WTAE- TV, 61 A.3d 336 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013)	January 14, 2013
708(b)(6)(i)(A); Commonwealth enjoined from releasing Statements of Financial Interest to the public, including accredited reporters, pursuant to a request made under RTKL without redacting "personal financial information," as defined in Section 102 of RTKL	Pa. Social Services Union v. Commonwealth of PA, 59 A.3d 1136 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2012)	December 14, 2012
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Section 708(b)(28) and agency regulations, identity of employers and claimants of unemployment compensation (UC) hearings held by the Department	Clark v. L&I, No. 2500 C.D. 2011, 2012 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 946 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2012)	December 7, 2012
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Altering request during appeal. Noncriminal investigation. Considering purpose of request.	Michak v. Department of Public Welfare (DPW) 56 A.3d 925 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2012)	November 9, 2012
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	(Pa. Commw. Ct. 2012)	2012
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	11, 2012)	
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Agency bears burden to overcome		
openness to show regulatory		
exemption applies		
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