



# pennsylvania

OFFICE OF OPEN RECORDS

## FINAL DETERMINATION

<b>IN THE MATTER OF</b>	:	
	:	
<b>OPEN FINANCES, LLC,</b>	:	
<b>Appellant</b>	:	
	:	
<b>v.</b>	:	<b>Docket No: AP 2026-1639</b>
	:	
<b>COLUMBIA COUNTY DISTRICT</b>	:	
<b>ATTORNEY’S OFFICE,</b>	:	
<b>Respondent</b>	:	

### **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

On April 9, 2026, Open Finances, LLC (“Open Finances”) emailed a request (“Request”) to the Columbia County District Attorney’s Office (“Office”) pursuant to the Right-to-Know Law (“RTKL”), 65 P.S. §§ 67.101 *et seq.*, seeking final determinations/final orders issued by the Appeals Officer for the Office under the RTKL in 2021 through 2025.

As Open Finances did not receive the Office’s response to the Request within five business days of the Request, Open Finances filed an appeal with the Office of Open Records (“OOR”) on April 23, 2026, alleging that the Request was deemed denied. *See* 65 P.S. § 67.901. The OOR invited both parties to supplement the record and directed the Office to notify the OOR if any third parties have a direct interest in this appeal. 65 P.S. § 67.1101(c). Neither party made a submission during the appeal.

## LEGAL ANALYSIS

The Office is a local agency subject to the RTKL. 65 P.S. § 67.302. Records in the possession of a local agency are presumed to be public, unless exempt under the RTKL or other law or protected by a privilege, judicial order or decree. *See* 65 P.S. § 67.305. As an agency subject to the RTKL, the Office is required to demonstrate, “by a preponderance of the evidence,” that records are exempt from public access. 65 P.S. § 67.708(a)(1). Preponderance of the evidence has been defined as “such proof as leads the fact-finder ... to find that the existence of a contested fact is more probable than its nonexistence.” *Pa. State Troopers Ass’n v. Scolforo*, 18 A.3d 435, 439 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2011) (quoting *Pa. Dep’t of Transp. v. Agric. Lands Condemnation Approval Bd.*, 5 A.3d 821, 827 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2010)).

As a preliminary matter, the OOR must determine whether Open Finances is a proper requester. Recently, in *Open Finances, LLC v. Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office*, OOR Dkt. AP 2026-1606, 2026 PA O.O.R.D. LEXIS \_\_\_ (“*Open Finances I*”), the OOR concluded that Open Finances was an anonymous requester under the RTKL. Therefore, for the reasons set forth in *Open Finances I*, the instant appeal must be dismissed, as the Office was under no obligation to respond to the Request and no appeal rights were triggered because of the denial.

## CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the appeal is **dismissed**, and the Office 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 Columbia County Court of Common Pleas. 65 P.S. § 67.1302(a). All parties must be served with notice of the appeal. The OOR also shall be served notice and have an opportunity to respond as per 65 P.S. § 67.1303, but as the quasi-judicial tribunal adjudicating this matter, the OOR is not a proper party to any appeal

and should not be named as a party.<sup>1</sup> All documents or communications following the issuance of this Final Determination shall be sent to [oor-postfd@pa.gov](mailto:oor-postfd@pa.gov). This Final Determination shall be placed on the OOR website at: <http://openrecords.pa.gov>.

**FINAL DETERMINATION ISSUED AND MAILED: 6 May 2026**

*/s/ Joshua T. Young*

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JOSHUA T. YOUNG, ESQ.  
SENIOR DEPUTY CHIEF COUNSEL

Sent via OOR e-file portal to: Open Finances, LLC;  
AORO, Columbia County District Attorney's Office

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<sup>1</sup> *Padgett v. Pa. State Police*, 73 A.3d 644, 648 n.5 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2013).