



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

Dear Fellow Texans:

In 1888, James Bryce wrote that sunlight kills the germs of corruption that can infect a government, and his words remain true today. As Attorney General, I make it a priority to encourage open government and to enforce the laws that mandate it. The Texas Public Information Act assures that government entities give citizens access to information about the business government officials are conducting on their behalf—information that enables the people of Texas to observe how their government works and to hold their public officials accountable. Texas government does not belong to elected officials, but to the people.

This updated guide helps public officials and the people they serve understand and comply with the Texas Public Information Act. You can view the handbook by visiting www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/publicinfo_hb.pdf. Where further help is needed, my office's Open Government Hotline is available to answer questions about open government in Texas. The toll-free number is 877-OPEN TEX (877-673-6839).

Texans have the right to monitor their government's decision making, including spending tax dollars and exercising powers granted by the people. That knowledge is essential to preserving the rule of law, protecting the democratic process, and defending the liberty we all cherish. The Public Information Act is a critical protection for that right, and I am proud to offer this guide in service of that goal.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Paxton". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "K" and "P".

Ken Paxton
Attorney General of Texas



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

Dear Fellow Texans:

Founding Father James Madison once wrote that democracy without information was "but prologue to a farce or a tragedy," and he regarded the diffusion of knowledge as "the only guardian of true liberty." Texas law has long agreed the inherent right of Texans to govern themselves depends on their ability to observe how public officials conduct the people's business. The Texas Open Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the Texas government is transparent, open, and accountable to the people.

At its core, the Texas Open Meetings Act requires government entities to keep official business accessible to the public. The *Open Meetings Act Handbook* helps public officials comply with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act and familiarizes our citizens with using the Open Meetings Act as a resource for obtaining information about their government. The handbook is available online and as a printable document at www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/openmeetings_hb.pdf.

As Attorney General, I am proud of my office's efforts to promote open government. We have established an Open Government Hotline for anyone seeking a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities under the law. The toll-free number is 877-OPEN TEX (877-673-6839).

Public access to the proceedings and decision-making processes of government is essential to a properly functioning and free state. It is my sincere hope that this handbook will make it easier for public officials and citizens to understand and comply with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Paxton". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "K" and "P".

Ken Paxton
Attorney General of Texas