

**O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72**

Current with Chapters 354 through 374 of the 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The Statutes do not reflect possible future codification directives from the Revisor of Statutes pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5. Additionally, the Statutes may be affected by prior or subsequent legislative enactment, revision, or executive action.

*Official Code of Georgia Annotated > TITLE 50 State Government (Chs. 1 — 40) > CHAPTER 18 State Printing and Documents (Arts. 1 — 7) > Article 4 Inspection of Public Records (§§ 50-18-70 — 50-18-78)*

**50-18-72. When public disclosure not required.**

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(a) Public disclosure shall not be required for records that are:

- (1) Specifically required by federal statute or regulation to be kept confidential;
- (2) Medical or veterinary records and similar files, the disclosure of which would be an invasion of personal privacy;
- (3) Except as otherwise provided by law, records compiled for law enforcement or prosecution purposes to the extent that production of such records is reasonably likely to disclose the identity of a confidential source, disclose confidential investigative or prosecution material which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person or persons, or disclose the existence of a confidential surveillance or investigation;
- (4) Records of law enforcement, prosecution, or regulatory agencies in any pending investigation or prosecution of criminal or unlawful activity, other than initial police arrest reports and initial incident reports; provided, however, that an investigation or prosecution shall no longer be deemed to be pending when all direct litigation involving such investigation and prosecution has become final or otherwise terminated; and provided, further, that this paragraph shall not apply to records in the possession of an agency that is the subject of the pending investigation or prosecution; and provided, further, that the release of booking photographs shall only be permissible in accordance with Code Section 35-1-19;
- (5) Individual Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Accident Reports, except upon the submission of a written statement of need by the requesting party to be provided to the custodian of records and to set forth the need for the report pursuant to this Code section; provided, however, that any person or entity whose name or identifying information is contained in a Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Accident Report shall be entitled, either personally or through a lawyer or other representative, to receive a copy of such report; and provided, further, that Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Accident Reports shall not be available in bulk for inspection or copying by any person absent a written statement showing the need for each such report pursuant to the requirements of this Code section. For the purposes of this subsection, the term

“need” means that the natural person or legal entity who is requesting in person or by representative to inspect or copy the Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Accident Report:

- (A) Has a personal, professional, or business connection with a party to the accident;
  - (B) Owns or leases an interest in property allegedly or actually damaged in the accident;
  - (C) Was allegedly or actually injured by the accident;
  - (D) Was a witness to the accident;
  - (E) Is the actual or alleged insurer of a party to the accident or of property actually or allegedly damaged by the accident;
  - (F) Is a prosecutor or a publicly employed law enforcement officer;
  - (G) Is alleged to be liable to another party as a result of the accident;
  - (H) Is an attorney stating that he or she needs the requested reports as part of a criminal case, or an investigation of a potential claim involving contentions that a roadway, railroad crossing, or intersection is unsafe;
  - (I) Is gathering information as a representative of a news media organization; provided, however, that such representative submits a statement affirming that the use of such accident report is in compliance with Code Section 33-24-53. Any person who knowingly makes a false statement in requesting such accident report shall be guilty of a violation of Code Section 16-10-20;
  - (J) Is conducting research in the public interest for such purposes as accident prevention, prevention of injuries or damages in accidents, determination of fault in an accident or accidents, or other similar purposes; provided, however, that this subparagraph shall apply only to accident reports on accidents that occurred more than 60 days prior to the request and which shall have the name, street address, telephone number, and driver’s license number redacted; or
  - (K) Is a governmental official, entity, or agency, or an authorized agent thereof, requesting reports for the purpose of carrying out governmental functions or legitimate governmental duties;
- (6) Jury list data, including, but not limited to, persons’ names, dates of birth, addresses, ages, race, gender, telephone numbers, social security numbers, and when it is available, the person’s ethnicity, and other confidential identifying information that is collected and used by The Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia for creating, compiling, and maintaining state-wide master jury lists and county master jury lists for the purpose of establishing and maintaining county jury source lists pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 12 of Title 15; provided, however, that when ordered by the judge of a court having jurisdiction over a case in which a challenge to the array of the grand or trial jury has been filed, The Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia, superior court clerk, or jury clerk shall provide data within the time limit established by the court for the limited purpose of such challenge. The Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia, superior court clerk, or jury clerk shall not be liable for any use or misuse of such data;

- (7) Records consisting of confidential evaluations submitted to, or examinations prepared by, a governmental agency and prepared in connection with the appointment or hiring of a public officer or employee;
- (8) Records consisting of material obtained in investigations related to the suspension, firing, or investigation of complaints against public officers or employees until ten days after the same has been presented to the agency or an officer for action or the investigation is otherwise concluded or terminated, provided that this paragraph shall not be interpreted to make such investigatory records privileged;
- (9) Real estate appraisals, engineering or feasibility estimates, or other records made for or by the state or a local agency relative to the acquisition of real property until such time as the property has been acquired or the proposed transaction has been terminated or abandoned;
- (10) Pending, rejected, or deferred sealed bids or sealed proposals and detailed cost estimates related thereto until such time as the final award of the contract is made, the project is terminated or abandoned, or the agency in possession of the records takes a public vote regarding the sealed bid or sealed proposal, whichever comes first;
- (11) Records which identify persons applying for or under consideration for employment or appointment as executive head of an agency or of a unit of the University System of Georgia; provided, however, that at least 14 calendar days prior to the meeting at which final action or vote is to be taken on the position of executive head of an agency or five business days prior to the meeting at which final action or vote is to be taken on the position of president of a unit of the University System of Georgia, all documents concerning as many as three persons under consideration whom the agency has determined to be the best qualified for the position shall be subject to inspection and copying. Prior to the release of these documents, an agency may allow such a person to decline being considered further for the position rather than have documents pertaining to such person released. In that event, the agency shall release the documents of the next most qualified person under consideration who does not decline the position. If an agency has conducted its hiring or appointment process without conducting interviews or discussing or deliberating in executive session in a manner otherwise consistent with Chapter 14 of this title, it shall not be required to delay final action on the position. The agency shall not be required to release such records of other applicants or persons under consideration, except at the request of any such person. Upon request, the hiring agency shall furnish the number of applicants and the composition of the list by such factors as race and sex. The agency shall not be allowed to avoid the provisions of this paragraph by the employment of a private person or agency to assist with the search or application process;
- (12) Records from the Department of Natural Resources that contain information relating to the location or character of a historic resource, pursuant to the authority granted by Code Section 12-3-50, if the Department of Natural Resources determines that disclosure may create a substantial risk of harm, theft, or destruction to such historic resource or any property, real or personal, at or near the location of the historic resource;
- (13) Records that are of historical research value which are given or sold to public archival institutions, public libraries, or libraries of a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia when the owner or donor of such records wishes to place restrictions on access to the records. No restriction on access, however, may extend more than 75 years from

the date of donation or sale. This exemption shall not apply to any records prepared in the course of the operation of state or local governments of the State of Georgia;

**(14)** Records that contain information from the Department of Community Affairs inventory and register relating to the location and character of a historic property or of historic properties as those terms are defined in Code Sections 12-3-50.1 and 12-3-50.2 if the Department of Community Affairs determines that disclosure will create a substantial risk of harm, theft, or destruction to the property or properties or the area or place where the property or properties are located;

**(15)** Records of farm water use by individual farms as determined by water-measuring devices installed pursuant to Code Section 12-5-31 or 12-5-105; provided, however, that compilations of such records for the 52 large watershed basins as identified by the eight-digit United States Geologic Survey hydrologic code or an aquifer that do not reveal farm water use by individual farms shall be subject to disclosure under this article;

**(16)** Agricultural or food system records, data, or information that are considered by the Department of Agriculture to be a part of the critical infrastructure, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the release of such records, data, or information to another state or federal agency if the release of such records, data, or information is necessary to prevent or control disease or to protect public health, safety, or welfare. As used in this paragraph, the term “critical infrastructure” shall have the same meaning as in 42 U.S.C. Section 5195c(e). Such records, data, or information shall be subject to disclosure only upon the order of a court of competent jurisdiction;

**(17)** Records, data, or information collected, recorded, or otherwise obtained that is deemed confidential by the Department of Agriculture for the purposes of the national animal identification system, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the release of such records, data, or information to another state or federal agency if the release of such records, data, or information is necessary to prevent or control disease or to protect public health, safety, or welfare. As used in this paragraph, the term “national animal identification program” means a national program intended to identify animals and track them as they come into contact with or commingle with animals other than herdmates from their premises of origin. Such records, data, or information shall be subject to disclosure only upon the order of a court of competent jurisdiction;

**(18)** Records that contain site-specific information regarding the occurrence of rare species of plants or animals or the location of sensitive natural habitats on public or private property if the Department of Natural Resources determines that disclosure will create a substantial risk of harm, theft, or destruction to the species or habitats or the area or place where the species or habitats are located; provided, however, that the owner or owners of private property upon which rare species of plants or animals occur or upon which sensitive natural habitats are located shall be entitled to such information pursuant to this article;

**(19)** Records that reveal the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, security codes, email addresses, or any other data or information developed, collected, or received by counties or municipalities in connection with neighborhood watch or public safety notification programs or with the installation, servicing, maintaining, operating, selling, or leasing of burglar alarm systems, fire alarm systems, or other electronic security systems; provided, however, that

initial police reports and initial incident reports shall remain subject to disclosure pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subsection;

**(20)**

**(A)** Records that reveal an individual's social security number, mother's birth name, credit card information, debit card information, bank account information, account number, utility account number, password used to access his or her account, financial data or information, insurance or medical information in all records, unlisted telephone number if so designated in a public record, personal email address or cellular telephone number, day and month of birth, and information regarding public utility, television, internet, or telephone accounts held by private customers, provided that nonitemized bills showing amounts owed and amounts paid shall be available. Items exempted by this subparagraph shall be redacted prior to disclosure of any record requested pursuant to this article; provided, however, that such information shall not be redacted from such records if the person or entity requesting such records requests such information in a writing signed under oath by such person or a person legally authorized to represent such entity which states that such person or entity is gathering information as a representative of a news media organization for use in connection with news gathering and reporting; and provided, further, that such access shall be limited to social security numbers and day and month of birth; and provided, further, that the news media organization exception in this subparagraph shall not apply to paragraph (21) of this subsection.

**(B)** This paragraph shall have no application to:

- (i)** The disclosure of information contained in the records or papers of any court or derived therefrom including without limitation records maintained pursuant to Article 9 of Title 11;
- (ii)** The disclosure of information to a court, prosecutor, or publicly employed law enforcement officer, or authorized agent thereof, seeking records in an official capacity;
- (iii)** The disclosure of information to a public employee of this state, its political subdivisions, or the United States who is obtaining such information for administrative purposes, in which case, subject to applicable laws of the United States, further access to such information shall continue to be subject to the provisions of this paragraph;
- (iv)** The disclosure of information as authorized by the order of a court of competent jurisdiction upon good cause shown to have access to any or all of such information upon such conditions as may be set forth in such order;
- (v)** The disclosure of information to the individual in respect of whom such information is maintained, with the authorization thereof, or to an authorized agent thereof; provided, however, that the agency maintaining such information shall require proper identification of such individual or such individual's agent, or proof of authorization, as determined by such agency;
- (vi)** The disclosure of the day and month of birth and mother's birth name of a deceased individual;

(vii) The disclosure by an agency of credit or payment information in connection with a request by a consumer reporting agency as that term is defined under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. Section 1681, et seq.);

(viii) The disclosure by an agency of information in its records in connection with the agency's discharging or fulfilling of its duties and responsibilities, including, but not limited to, the collection of debts owed to the agency or individuals or entities whom the agency assists in the collection of debts owed to the individual or entity;

(ix) The disclosure of information necessary to comply with legal or regulatory requirements or for legitimate law enforcement purposes; or

(x) The disclosure of the date of birth within criminal records.

(C) Records and information disseminated pursuant to this paragraph may be used only by the authorized recipient and only for the authorized purpose. Any person who obtains records or information pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph and knowingly and willfully discloses, distributes, or sells such records or information to an unauthorized recipient or for an unauthorized purpose shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature and upon conviction thereof shall be punished as provided in Code Section 17-10-4. Any person injured thereby shall have a cause of action for invasion of privacy.

(D) In the event that the custodian of public records protected by this paragraph has good faith reason to believe that a pending request for such records has been made fraudulently, under false pretenses, or by means of false swearing, such custodian shall apply to the superior court of the county in which such records are maintained for a protective order limiting or prohibiting access to such records.

(E) This paragraph shall supplement and shall not supplant, overrule, replace, or otherwise modify or supersede any provision of statute, regulation, or law of the federal government or of this state as now or hereafter amended or enacted requiring, restricting, or prohibiting access to the information identified in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and shall constitute only a regulation of the methods of such access where not otherwise provided for, restricted, or prohibited;

(21) Records concerning public employees that reveal the public employee's home address, home telephone number, personal mobile or wireless telephone number, day and month of birth, social security number, insurance information, medical information, mother's birth name, credit card information, debit card information, bank account information, account number, utility account number, password used to access his or her account, financial data and information other than compensation by a government agency, unlisted telephone number if so designated in a public record, and the identity of the public employee's immediate family members or dependents. This paragraph shall not apply to public records that do not specifically identify public employees or their jobs, titles, or offices. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term 'public employee' means any officer, employee, or former employee of:

(A) The State of Georgia or its agencies, departments, or commissions;

(B) Any county or municipality or its agencies, departments, or commissions;

(C) Other political subdivisions of this state;

- (D)** Teachers in public and charter schools and nonpublic schools;
- (E)** Early care and education programs administered through the Department of Early Care and Learning; or
- (F)** The federal government or its agencies, departments, or commissions;

**(21.1)**

**(A)** Records of the Department of Human Services concerning any foster parent or former foster parent that reveal his or her home address, home telephone number, day and month of birth, social security number, insurance or medical information, mother's birth name, credit card information, debit card information, bank account information, account number, utility account number, password used to access his or her account, financial data or information other than compensation by a government agency, or unlisted telephone number if so designated in a public record or that reveal the identity of his or her immediate family members or dependents.

**(B)** For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "foster parent or former foster parent" means individuals who were approved to serve in such capacity by the Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services or a child-placing agency licensed in accordance with Code Section 49-5-12;

**(22)** Records of the Department of Early Care and Learning that contain the:

- (A)** Names of children and day and month of each child's birth;
- (B)** Names, addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses of parents, immediate family members, and emergency contact persons; or
- (C)** Names or other identifying information of individuals who report violations to the department;

**(23)** Public records containing information that would disclose or might lead to the disclosure of any component in the process used to execute or adopt an electronic signature, if such disclosure would or might cause the electronic signature to cease being under the sole control of the person using it. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "electronic signature" has the same meaning as that term is defined in Code Section 10-12-2;

**(24)** Records acquired by an agency for the purpose of establishing or implementing, or assisting in the establishment or implementation of, a carpooling or ridesharing program, including, but not limited to, the formation of carpools, vanpools, or buspools, the provision of transit routes, rideshare research, and the development of other demand management strategies such as variable working hours and telecommuting;

**(25)**

**(A)** Records the disclosure of which would compromise security against sabotage or criminal or terrorist acts and the nondisclosure of which is necessary for the protection of life, safety, or public property, which shall be limited to the following:

- (i)** Security plans and vulnerability assessments for any public utility, technology infrastructure, building, facility, function, or activity in effect at the time of the request for disclosure or pertaining to a plan or assessment in effect at such time;

- (ii) Any plan for protection against terrorist or other attacks that depends for its effectiveness in whole or in part upon a lack of general public knowledge of its details;
- (iii) Any document relating to the existence, nature, location, or function of security devices designed to protect against terrorist or other attacks that depend for their effectiveness in whole or in part upon a lack of general public knowledge;
- (iv) Any plan, blueprint, or other material which if made public could compromise security against sabotage, criminal, or terroristic acts;
- (v) Any document or plan for protection relating to the existence, nature, location, or function of cybersecurity devices, programs, or systems designed to protect computer, information technology, or communication systems against terrorist or other attacks that depend for their effectiveness in whole or in part upon a lack of general public knowledge; and
- (vi) Records of any government sponsored programs concerning training relative to governmental security measures which would identify persons being trained or instructors or would reveal information described in divisions (i) through (v) of this subparagraph.

**(B)** In the event of litigation challenging nondisclosure pursuant to this paragraph by an agency of a document covered by this paragraph, the court may review the documents in question in camera and may condition, in writing, any disclosure upon such measures as the court may find to be necessary to protect against endangerment of life, safety, or public property.

**(C)** As used in division (i) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the term “activity” means deployment or surveillance strategies, actions mandated by changes in the federal threat level, motorcades, contingency plans, proposed or alternative motorcade routes, executive and dignitary protection, planned responses to criminal or terrorist actions, after-action reports still in use, proposed or actual plans and responses to bioterrorism, and proposed or actual plans and responses to requesting and receiving the National Pharmacy Stockpile;

**(25.1)** School safety plans prepared pursuant to Code Section 20-2-1185, whether in the possession of a local school system, a local law enforcement agency, a local emergency management agency, the Department of Education, the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, or any other public entity;

**(25.2)** Records of a person’s name and driver’s license information collected and maintained for purposes of Code Section 20-2-1127;

**(26)** Unless the request is made by the accused in a criminal case or by his or her attorney, public records of an emergency 9-1-1 system, as defined in paragraph (5) of Code Section 46-5-122, containing information which would reveal the name, address, or telephone number of a person placing a call to a public safety answering point. Such information may be redacted from such records if necessary to prevent the disclosure of the identity of a confidential source, to prevent disclosure of material which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person or persons, or to prevent the disclosure of the existence of a confidential surveillance or investigation;



**(26.1)** In addition to the exemption provided by paragraph (26) of this subsection, audio recordings of a 9-1-1 telephone call to a public safety answering point which contain the speech in distress or cries in extremis of a caller who died during the call or the speech or cries of a person who was a minor at the time of the call, except to the following, provided that the person seeking the audio recording of a 9-1-1 telephone call submits a sworn affidavit that attests to the facts necessary to establish eligibility under this paragraph:

- (A)** A duly appointed representative of a deceased caller's estate;
- (B)** A parent or legal guardian of a minor caller;
- (C)** An accused in a criminal case when, in the good faith belief of the accused, the audio recording of the 9-1-1 telephone call is relevant to his or her criminal proceeding;
- (D)** A party to a civil action when, in the good faith belief of such party, the audio recording of the 9-1-1 telephone call is relevant to the civil action;
- (E)** An attorney for any of the persons identified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of this paragraph; or
- (F)** An attorney for a person who may pursue a civil action when, in the good faith belief of such attorney, the audio recording of the 9-1-1 telephone call is relevant to the potential civil action;

**(26.2)** Audio and video recordings from devices used by law enforcement officers in a place where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy when there is no pending investigation, except to the following, provided that the person seeking the audio or video recording submits a sworn affidavit that attests to the facts necessary to establish eligibility under this paragraph:

- (A)** A duly appointed representative of a deceased's estate when the decedent was depicted or heard on such recording;
- (B)** A parent or legal guardian of a minor depicted or heard on such recording;
- (C)** An accused in a criminal case when, in the good faith belief of the accused, such recording is relevant to his or her criminal proceeding;
- (D)** A party to a civil action when, in the good faith belief of such party, such recording is relevant to the civil action;
- (E)** An attorney for any of the persons identified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of this paragraph; or
- (F)** An attorney for a person who may pursue a civil action when, in the good faith belief of such attorney, such recording is relevant to the potential civil action;

**(27)** Records of athletic or recreational programs, available through the state or a political subdivision of the state, that include information identifying a child or children 12 years of age or under by name, address, telephone number, or emergency contact, unless such identifying information has been redacted;

**(28)** Records or data of the State Road and Tollway Authority or the Department of Transportation which would reveal the financial accounts, travel history, vehicle information, or personally identifiable information of any individual who is a motorist upon any toll project or roadway;

**(29)** Records maintained by public postsecondary educational institutions in this state and associated foundations of such institutions that contain personal information concerning donors or potential donors to such institutions or foundations; provided, however, that the name of any donor and the amount of donation made by such donor shall be subject to disclosure if such donor or any entity in which such donor has a substantial interest transacts business with the public postsecondary educational institution to which the donation is made within three years of the date of such donation. As used in this paragraph, the term “transact business” means to sell or lease any personal property, real property, or services on behalf of oneself or on behalf of any third party as an agent, broker, dealer, or representative in an amount in excess of \$10,000.00 in the aggregate in a calendar year; and the term “substantial interest” means the direct or indirect ownership of more than 25 percent of the assets or stock of an entity;

**(30)** Records of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority or of any other transit system that is connected to that system’s TransCard, SmartCard, or successor or similar system which would reveal the financial records or travel history of any individual who is a purchaser of a TransCard, SmartCard, or successor or similar fare medium. Such financial records shall include, but not be limited to, social security number, home address, home telephone number, email address, credit or debit card information, and bank account information but shall not include the user’s name;

**(31)** Building mapping information produced and maintained pursuant to Article 10 of Chapter 3 of Title 38;

**(32)** Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (4) of this subsection, any physical evidence or investigatory materials that are evidence of an alleged violation of Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 and are in the possession, custody, or control of law enforcement, prosecution, or regulatory agencies;

**(33)** Records that are expressly exempt from public inspection pursuant to Code Section 47-1-14;

**(34)** Any trade secrets obtained from a person or business entity that are required by law, regulation, bid, or request for proposal to be submitted to an agency. An entity submitting records containing trade secrets that wishes to keep such records confidential under this paragraph shall submit and attach to the records an affidavit affirmatively declaring that specific information in the records constitute trade secrets pursuant to Article 27 of Chapter 1 of Title 10. If such entity attaches such an affidavit, before producing such records in response to a request under this article, the agency shall notify the entity of its intention to produce such records as set forth in this paragraph. If the agency makes a determination that the specifically identified information does not in fact constitute a trade secret, it shall notify the entity submitting the affidavit of its intent to disclose the information within ten days unless prohibited from doing so by an appropriate court order. In the event the entity wishes to prevent disclosure of the requested records, the entity may file an action in superior court to obtain an order that the requested records are trade secrets exempt from disclosure. The entity filing such action shall serve the requestor with a copy of its court filing. If the agency makes a determination that the specifically identified information does constitute a trade secret, the agency shall withhold the records, and the requester may file an action in superior court to obtain an order that the requested records are not trade secrets and are subject to disclosure;

**(35)** Data, records, or information of a proprietary nature produced or collected by or for faculty or staff of state institutions of higher learning, or other governmental agencies, in the conduct of, or as a result of, study or research on commercial, scientific, technical, or scholarly issues, whether sponsored by the institution alone or in conjunction with a governmental body or private concern, where such data, records, or information has not been publicly released, published, copyrighted, or patented;

**(36)** Any data, records, or information developed, collected, or received by or on behalf of faculty, staff, employees, or students of an institution of higher education or any public or private entity supporting or participating in the activities of an institution of higher education in the conduct of, or as a result of, study or research on medical, scientific, technical, scholarly, or artistic issues, whether sponsored by the institution alone or in conjunction with a governmental body or private entity, until such information is published, patented, otherwise publicly disseminated, or released to an agency whereupon the request must be made to the agency. This paragraph shall apply to, but shall not be limited to, information provided by participants in research, research notes and data, discoveries, research projects, methodologies, protocols, and creative works;

**(37)** Any record that would not be subject to disclosure, or the disclosure of which would jeopardize the receipt of federal funds, under 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g or its implementing regulations;

**(38)** Unless otherwise provided by law, records consisting of questions, scoring keys, and other materials constituting a test that derives value from being unknown to the test taker prior to administration which is to be administered by an agency, including, but not limited to, any public school, any unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, any public technical school, the State Board of Education, the Office of Student Achievement, the Professional Standards Commission, or a local school system, if reasonable measures are taken by the owner of the test to protect security and confidentiality; provided, however, that the State Board of Education may establish procedures whereby a person may view, but not copy, such records if viewing will not, in the judgment of the board, affect the result of administration of such test. These limitations shall not be interpreted by any court of law to include or otherwise exempt from inspection the records of any athletic association or other nonprofit entity promoting intercollegiate athletics;

**(39)** Records disclosing the identity or personally identifiable information of any person participating in research on commercial, scientific, technical, medical, scholarly, or artistic issues conducted by the Department of Community Health, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, or a state institution of higher education whether sponsored by the institution alone or in conjunction with a governmental body or private entity;

**(40)** Any permanent records maintained by a judge of the probate court pursuant to Code Section 16-11-129, relating to weapons carry licenses, or pursuant to any other requirement for maintaining records relative to the possession of firearms, except to the extent that such records relating to licensing and possession of firearms are sought by law enforcement agencies or a judge of the probate court as provided by law;

**(41)** Records containing communications subject to the attorney-client privilege recognized by state law; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to the factual findings, but shall apply to the legal conclusions, of an attorney conducting an investigation on behalf of an agency so long as such investigation does not pertain to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee; and provided, further, that such investigations conducted by hospital authorities to ensure compliance with federal or state law, regulations, or reimbursement policies shall be exempt from disclosure if such investigations are otherwise subject to the attorney-client privilege. Attorney-client communications, however, may be obtained in a proceeding under Code Section 50-18-73 to prove justification or lack thereof in refusing disclosure of documents under this Code section provided the judge of the court in which such proceeding is pending shall first determine by an in camera examination that such disclosure would be relevant on that issue. In addition, when an agency withholds information subject to this paragraph, any party authorized to bring a proceeding under Code Section 50-18-73 may request that the judge of the court in which such proceeding is pending determine by an in camera examination whether such information was properly withheld;

**(42)** Confidential attorney work product; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to the factual findings, but shall apply to the legal conclusions, of an attorney conducting an investigation on behalf of an agency so long as such investigation does not pertain to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee; and provided, further, that such investigations conducted by hospital authorities to ensure compliance with federal or state law, regulations, or reimbursement policies shall be exempt from disclosure if such investigations are otherwise subject to confidentiality as attorney work product. In addition, when an agency withholds information subject to this paragraph, any party authorized to bring a proceeding under Code Section 50-18-73 may request that the judge of the court in which such proceeding is pending determine by an in camera examination whether such information was properly withheld;

**(43)** Records containing tax matters or tax information that is confidential under state or federal law;

**(44)** Records consisting of any computer program or computer software used or maintained in the course of operation of a public office or agency; provided, however, that data generated, kept, or received by an agency shall be subject to inspection and copying as provided in this article;

**(45)** Records pertaining to the rating plans, rating systems, underwriting rules, surveys, inspections, statistical plans, or similar proprietary information used to provide or administer liability insurance or self-insurance coverage to any agency;

**(46)** Documents maintained by any agency, as such term is defined in subparagraph (a)(1)(A) of Code Section 50-14-1, which pertain to an economic development project until the economic development project is secured by binding commitment, provided that any such documents shall be disclosed upon proper request after a binding commitment has been secured or the project has been terminated. No later than five business days after the Department of Economic Development secures a binding commitment and the department has

committed the use of state funds from the OneGeorgia Authority or funds from Regional Economic Business Assistance for the project pursuant to Code Section 50-8-8, or other provisions of law, the Department of Economic Development shall give notice that a binding commitment has been reached by posting on its website notice of the project in conjunction with a copy of the Department of Economic Development's records documenting the bidding commitment made in connection with the project and the negotiation relating thereto and by publishing notice of the project and participating parties in the legal organ of each county in which the economic development project is to be located. As used in this paragraph, the term "economic development project" means a plan or proposal to locate a business, or to expand a business, that would involve an expenditure of more than \$25 million by the business or the hiring of more than 50 employees by the business;

**(47)** Records related to a training program operated under the authority of Article 3 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 disclosing an economic development project prior to a binding commitment having been secured, relating to job applicants, or identifying proprietary hiring practices, training, skills, or other business methods and practices of a private entity. As used in this paragraph, the term "economic development project" means a plan or proposal to locate a business, or to expand a business, that would involve an expenditure of more than \$25 million by the business or the hiring of more than 50 employees by the business;

**(48)** Records that are expressly exempt from public inspection pursuant to Code Section 47-20-87;

**(49)** Data, records, or information acquired by the Commissioner of Labor or the Department of Labor as part of any investigation required pursuant to Code Section 39-2-18, relating to minors employed as actors or performers;

**(50)** Held by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority or any other public or private entity for and on behalf of a clerk of superior court; provided, however, that such records may be obtained from a clerk of superior court unless otherwise exempted from disclosure; or

**(51)** Reports submitted to the Department of Revenue, the Atlanta-region Transit Link "ATL" Authority, or the Department of Transportation by a for-hire ground transport service provider as required pursuant to Code Section 48-13-143.

**(b)** This Code section shall be interpreted narrowly so as to exclude from disclosure only that portion of a public record to which an exclusion is directly applicable. It shall be the duty of the agency having custody of a record to provide all other portions of a record for public inspection or copying.

**(c)**

**(1)** Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, an exhibit tendered to the court as evidence in a criminal or civil trial shall not be open to public inspection without approval of the judge assigned to the case.

**(2)** Except as provided in subsection (d) of this Code section, in the event inspection is not approved by the court, in lieu of inspection of such an exhibit, the custodian of such an exhibit shall, upon request, provide one or more of the following:

**(A)** A photograph;

- (B) A photocopy;
- (C) A facsimile; or
- (D) Another reproduction.

(3) The provisions of this article regarding fees for production of a record, including, but not limited to, subsections (c) and (d) of Code Section 50-18-71, shall apply to exhibits produced according to this subsection.

(d) Any physical evidence that is used as an exhibit in a criminal or civil trial to show or support an alleged violation of Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 shall not be open to public inspection except by court order. If the judge approves inspection of such physical evidence, the judge shall designate, in writing, the facility owned or operated by an agency of the state or local government where such physical evidence may be inspected. If the judge permits inspection, such property or material shall not be photographed, copied, or reproduced by any means. Any person who violates the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than 20 years, a fine of not more than \$100,000.00, or both.

## History

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Ga. L. 1967, p. 455, § 1; Ga. L. 1970, p. 163, § 1; Code 1981, § 50-18-72, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1789, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1090, § 2; Ga. L. 1987, p. 377, § 1; Ga. L. 1988, p. 13, § 50; Ga. L. 1988, p. 243, § 3; Ga. L. 1989, p. 553, § 2; Ga. L. 1989, p. 827, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 341, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1061, § 8; Ga. L. 1993, p. 968, § 1; Ga. L. 1993, p. 1336, § 1; Ga. L. 1993, p. 1669, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 704, § 1; Ga. L. 1996, p. 6, § 50; Ga. L. 1997, p. 1052, § 2; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1652, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 552, §§ 4, 4.1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 809, §§ 4, 5; Ga. L. 1999, p. 1222, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 2000, p. 136, § 50; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1556, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 2001, p. 4, § 50; Ga. L. 2001, p. 327, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 331, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 491, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 820, § 13; Ga. L. 2002, p. 415, § 50; Ga. L. 2003, p. 602, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 880, § 2; Ga. L. 2004, p. 107, § 22; Ga. L. 2004, p. 161, § 15; Ga. L. 2004, p. 341, § 1A; Ga. L. 2004, p. 410, § 9; Ga. L. 2004, p. 770, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 334, § 30-2/HB 501; Ga. L. 2005, p. 558, § 1/HB 437; Ga. L. 2005, p. 595, § 1/SB 121; Ga. L. 2005, p. 660, § 11/HB 470; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1133, § 1/HB 340; Ga. L. 2006, p. 72, § 50/SB 465; Ga. L. 2006, p. 536, § 1/HB 955; Ga. L. 2007, p. 87, § 1/SB 212; Ga. L. 2007, p. 160, § 1/HB 101; Ga. L. 2008, p. 564, § 2/SB 33; Ga. L. 2008, p. 829, § 4/HB 1020; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 50/SB 46; Ga. L. 2009, p. 37, §§ 1, 1.1, 1.2/SB 26; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2009, p. 698, § 7/HB 126; Ga. L. 2010, p. 243, §§ 1, 2/HB 1086; Ga. L. 2010, p. 286, § 23/SB 244; Ga. L. 2010, p. 415, § 2/HB 249; Ga. L. 2010, p. 963, § 2-21/SB 308; Ga. L. 2011, p. 59, §§ 3-1, 1-68/HB 415; Ga. L. 2011, p. 611, § 1/HB 261; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 5-29/HB 214; Ga. L. 2012, p. 211, § 4/SB 402; Ga. L. 2012, p. 218, § 2/HB 397; Ga. L. 2012, p. 775, § 50/HB 942; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 50/HB 79; Ga. L. 2014, p. 418, § 2/HB 828; Ga. L. 2014, p. 451, § 15/HB 776; Ga. L. 2014, p. 692, § 1/HB 449; Ga. L. 2014, p. 742, § 2/HB 845; Ga. L. 2014, p. 866, § 50/SB 340; Ga. L. 2015, p. 805, § 13/HB 492; Ga. L. 2015, p. 943, § 5/HB 366; Ga. L. 2015, p. 1046, § 5/SB 94; Ga. L. 2015, p. 1065, § 2-3/SB 135; Ga. L. 2016, p. 6, § 2/SB 323; Ga. L. 2018, p. 753, § 3/HB 763; Ga. L. 2018, p. 927, § 4-1/HB 906; Ga. L. 2019, p. 302, § 1-2/HB 459; Ga. L. 2020, p. 38, § 9/SB 473; Ga. L. 2020, p. 493, § 50/SB 429; Ga. L. 2020, p. 903, § 2-3/HB 105; Ga. L. 2021, p. 110, § 2/HB 134; Ga. L. 2021, p. 559, § 2/SB 32; Ga. L. 2021, p. 922,

§ 50/HB 497; Ga. L. 2023, p. 351, § 1/HB 165, effective May 2, 2023; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 6(b)(13)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023; Ga. L. 2024, p. SB 353, § 6/SB 353, effective March 4, 2024.

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