



PURSUING MAXIMUM TRANSPARENCY WITH MINIMUM DELAY

The Public Utility Commission of Texas is committed to the maximum degree of transparency permitted by law, relying on Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code, also known as the [Public Information Act](#), to guide our actions. The PIA not only gives the public the right to access certain government records, it also establishes procedures that governmental bodies must follow when responding to requests for public information. To read more about our policies, click [here](#).

In response to the February grid event, PIA requests have been arriving at a record pace, challenging our small team to respond. The following FAQ is provided to give context on our processes.

Q: What happens when the PUC gets a PIA request?

A: In the interest of fairness, we consistently follow a series of steps when we receive a PIA request:

1. **We add it to our queue.** The Public Information Act sets out specific deadlines and requires us to treat requestors consistently, without giving special consideration to any requestor. As a result, we respond to requests in the order they are received.
2. **We search for responsive information.** The broader the request, the longer it can take to gather information. It may exist in filings, employee work product, email communications or other types of records. This process can involve many people throughout the agency who are familiar with the requested information to determine if it is responsive and releasable.
3. **We assess our ability to legally release the information.** Some information must be kept confidential under the law and we could be subject to criminal penalties for releasing it. (See Tex. Gov't. Code § 552.352.) For example, information that would reveal vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure (*grid components such as generation equipment or transmission and distribution infrastructure are critical infrastructure*) is restricted because it could be used to plan attacks on that infrastructure. Other information is restricted because regulated entities have represented it to us as confidential.
4. **We deliver non-confidential information to the requestor.**
5. **We ask the Attorney General's office to affirm the accuracy of our confidentiality assessment.** No matter how bad a requestor wants it, we cannot release information deemed confidential without a decision from the AG.

Q: Why can't I get releasable information right away?

A: The PUC is currently receiving PIA requests for deeply detailed information at more than five times the normal rate, thanks to inquiries related to the February grid event. As our small PIA team works overtime to respond, we're working hard to honor the deadlines set forth by law:

- **Respond to requestors** (10 business days after the request)
- **Request an attorney general decision** (10 business days after the request)
- **Deliver confidential information and our reasons for withholding it to the Attorney General** (15 business days after the request).

The only deadline we can extend in any way is the deadline for responding to requestors. If a response cannot be made within ten business days, the law allows us to convey a date and time by which any non-confidential information will be released. Since we're handling requests in the order received, the PUC has been routinely notifying requestors we will be unable to meet the ten day deadline, especially when there is a large amount of information responsive to a request.