
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5548

AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYEE RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES AND CERTAIN HIGHER EDUCATION RECORDS.

SUMMARY

This bill expands the list of people covered by the Freedom of Information Act's (FOIA) limitation on public agencies disclosing home addresses by adding any public agency employee whose residence is not a condition of employment to the list. It also expands the scope of these address protections.

The bill also exempts from disclosure under FOIA records maintained or kept on file by or for the faculty or staff of a public higher education institution related to teaching or research on medical, artistic, scientific, legal, or other scholarly issues, including any records of legal clinics or centers. The bill specifically excludes from the exemption the institution's financial records.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

FOIA ADDRESS DISCLOSURE

Covered Individuals

The bill prohibits a public agency from disclosing, under FOIA, a public employee's address from the agency's personnel, medical, or similar files, unless residency is a condition or term of the employee's employment.

By law, a "public" agency generally includes state executive and legislative agencies and other state entities, municipalities and political subdivisions and their agencies and other entities, judicial offices' administrative functions, an entity that is the functional equivalent of one of these, and certain nonprofit development corporations designated by a municipality related to certain projects.

Under existing law, the following public officials and employees are already covered by FOIA's home address disclosure limitation:

1. federal judges and magistrates, Connecticut judges and family support magistrates, judicial branch employees, prosecutors, public defenders, public defender social workers, and Division of Criminal Justice inspectors;
2. firefighters, state marshals, and police officers;
3. Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services employees who provide direct patient care, and employees of the departments of Correction and Children and Families; and
4. members and employees of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Scope of Limitation

Currently, a public agency employing a listed person cannot disclose their residential addresses from the agency's personnel, medical, or similar files. The bill extends this to apply to any public agency that has a listed person's personnel, medical, or similar files, regardless of whether the agency is the person's employer.

By law, for records not covered by this provision, a listed person can request that an agency not disclose a residential address. Under existing law, an agency that receives a FOIA request about a covered person who requested address confidentiality must redact the person's home address only from records given in response to a request that specifically names him or her. Additionally, the agency must make reasonable efforts to redact the person's address from (1) an existing list derived from a readily accessible electronic database and (2) any list that the agency voluntarily creates in response to a disclosure request. The law permits disclosure of a covered person's residential address in any other type of record (other than in their employer's personnel, medical, or similar files, as described above).

The disclosure prohibition also does not apply to a home address in

(1) documents eligible to be recorded in municipal land records; (2) any list required by the state's election laws (such as voter registry lists, petition forms, and logs of absentee ballot applications); or (3) municipal grand lists.

BACKGROUND

FOIA Exceptions

FOIA generally requires government documents and records to be made available to the public, however, there are exceptions. Among others, existing exceptions include test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used to administer a licensing, employment, or academic exam.

Related Bills

HB 5550, favorably reported by the Government Administration and Elections Committee, exempts from disclosure under FOIA records created by or for the faculty or staff of a public institution of higher education that are course syllabi.

SB 325, File 292, favorably reported by the Government Oversight Committee, prohibits disclosure of the residential addresses of school employees under FOIA.

SB 492, favorably reported by the Government Administration and Elections Committee, prohibits disclosure of the residential addresses of public agency employees under FOIA.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/23/2026)