

AUG 01 2024

PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT CATASTROPHE NOTICE

Please review the attached instructions prior to completing the form. Instructions may also be viewed at <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/governmental-bodies/catastrophe-notice>.

SECTION 1 – GOVERNMENTAL BODY IMPACTED BY THE CATASTROPHE

GOVERNMENT CODE § 552.2325

Pursuant to section 552.2325(b), a governmental body may suspend the applicability of the requirements of the Public Information Act (the “Act”) if the governmental body is currently significantly impacted by a catastrophe such that the catastrophe directly causes the inability of a governmental body to comply with the Act and provides proper notice in accordance with this section.

The University of Houston

(Name of Governmental Body Impacted by the Catastrophe) PLEASE PRINT

SECTION 2 – IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE CATASTROPHE

Section 552.2325(a)(1) defines catastrophe as a “condition or occurrence that directly interferes with the ability of a governmental body to comply with the requirements of this chapter[.]” However, section 552.2325(a)(2) further clarifies that catastrophe “does not mean a period when staff is required to work remotely and can access information responsive to an application for information electronically, but the physical office of the governmental body is closed.” Identify and describe the catastrophe impacting the governmental body:

Please see Page 3

SECTION 3 – SUSPENSION PERIOD

The governmental body may suspend the applicability of the requirements of the Act only once for each catastrophe. The initial suspension period may not exceed seven consecutive calendar days. A governmental body may not submit a catastrophe notice more than two calendar days prior to the beginning date of the suspension period. If the catastrophe impact is longer than seven calendar days, a governmental body may submit an extension notice at the end of the initial suspension period. A governmental body may only file one extension notice, and the extension notice may not exceed seven consecutive calendar days. However, the combined suspension period of both the initial and extension may not exceed a total of 14 consecutive calendar days with respect to any single catastrophe. See Gov’t Code §552.2325(d), (e), and (g).

Beginning Date of Initial Suspension: July 8, 2024

End Date of Initial Suspension: July 12, 2024

Please note: Governmental bodies may not submit the initial suspension notice and the extension notice at the same time or on the same form. For purposes of section 552.2325, the first day (beginning date) and the end date of the suspension period is counted as part of the suspension period.

TO THE PUBLIC: For questions regarding this notice or if you believe a violation of the Act has occurred, please contact the OAG Open Government Hotline at (512) 463-2013 or toll free at 1-877-673-6839.

SECTION 4 – GOVERNMENTAL BODY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Noah H. Alford

Title: Assistant General Counsel Phone Number: 713-743-4479

Signature: Noah Hansen Alford Digitally signed by Noah Hansen Alford
Date: 2024.07.23 10:35:27 -0500 Date: 7/23/2024

PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT CATASTROPHE NOTICE INSTRUCTIONS

These are the instructions for completing the Office of the Attorney General's ("OAG") Public Information Act Catastrophe Notice form pursuant to section 552.2325 of the Government Code. If you have any questions concerning the form, please contact the **Open Government Hotline** at (512) 463-2013 or toll free 1-877-673-6839.

SUBMITTING NOTICE TO THE OAG:

Notices may be provided to the OAG by any of the following methods:

- Online submission form: <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/opengovernment/governmental-bodies/catastrophe-notice/submit-catastrophe-notice>
- Mailing the notice to the following address:
Attn: Public Information Act Catastrophe Notice
Office of the Attorney General - Open Records Division
P.O. Box 12548
- Austin, Texas 78711-2548

If you are unable submit the notice by any of the listed methods, please contact the **Open Government Hotline** at (512) 463-2013 or toll free 1-877-673-6839 for assistance.

SECTION 1: Provide the name of the governmental body impacted by the catastrophe. Section 552.2325(a)(1) of the Government Code defines catastrophe as "a condition or occurrence that directly interferes with the ability of a governmental body to comply with the requirements of this chapter[.]"

SECTION 2: Identify and provide a detailed description of the catastrophe, including how the catastrophe interferes with the ability of the governmental body to comply with the requirements of the Act. The catastrophe description should enable any person who views this notice to readily identify the catastrophe and its impact on the governmental body.

SECTION 3: Provide the dates of the initial suspension period of the governmental body. The suspension may be instated for a period of up to seven consecutive calendar days. The beginning date is counted as part of the suspension period, and it may not be more than two calendar days before submission. The initial suspension period may begin up to two calendar days before the governmental body provides proper notice to the OAG, but it may not be for longer than seven consecutive calendar days, including the beginning date of the suspension period. It also may not be for more than seven calendar days after notice is submitted.

SECTION 4: Provide the contact information of the governmental body's Public Information Officer or an authorized agent. The person listed should be able to answer any questions the OAG may have regarding the governmental body's catastrophe notice.

PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT CATASTROPHE NOTICE EXTENSION INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION 1: This page should not be filled out unless the governmental body has determined it is still impacted by the catastrophe on which the initial suspension period was based. *See Gov't Code §552.2325(e).*

SECTION 2: Provide the beginning and end dates of the initial suspension period and identify the catastrophe listed on the initial notice of catastrophe form.

SECTION 3: Provide the dates for the extension of the initial suspension period. The suspension period may be extended an additional seven consecutive calendar days. The suspension period may only be extended one time and must begin on the calendar day following the end date of the initial suspension. The total time frame of the suspension period should not exceed fourteen calendar days. A copy of this form noting the extension must be provided to the OAG. The extension notice should be signed by the governmental body's Public Information Officer or an authorized agent.

SECTION 4: Provide the contact information of the governmental body's Public Information Officer or an authorized agent. The person listed should be able to answer any questions the OAG may have regarding the governmental body's catastrophe notice.

Identify and Describe the Catastrophe:

On Monday July 8, 2024, Hurricane Beryl made landfall in Texas impacting a large portion of southeast Texas, including the University of Houston (the "University"). Due to dangerous storm conditions, flooding, and ultimately the loss of power and internet service, the University was forced to close its buildings to both the public and staff on Monday July 8, 2024. The loss and/or intermittent availability of these resources and the inability of employees, including Public Information Officers, to access all necessary systems, information, and records made it impossible to effectively and appropriately respond to public information requests during this period. After restoration of power and additional assessment the University determined it could reopen its offices on Monday, July 15, 2024. Based on the foregoing, the University respectfully submits this Catastrophe Notice in accordance with the Texas Government Code for the calendar days of Monday, July 8, 2024, through Friday, July 12, 2024.

