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By Opinion Committee at 3:58 pm, Oct 30, 2024

RQ-0569-KP



**GRAYSON COUNTY CRIMINAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY
J. BRETT SMITH**

October 24, 2024

SENT VIA CERTIFIED MAIL NO.: 9589 0710 5270 0735 4629 10

Office of the Attorney General of Texas

Attn: Opinion Committee

P.O. Box 12548

Austin, Texas 78711-2548

Re: *Grayson County's Request for Opinion on Whether the County must Provide Emergency Services to the Unincorporated Areas of the County.*

Dear Sir or Madam:

At the request of the County Judge of Grayson County, Texas, this request for legal opinion is sought from the Attorney General's Office.

Grayson County is a rapidly growing jurisdiction in North Texas. Due to changes in Texas law, municipalities are no longer able to annex neighborhoods in unincorporated areas. Historically, Grayson County has contracted for emergency services (fire and ambulance) providing coverage in the unincorporated areas of the County.

Grayson County has entered into contracts for services to cover all of the unincorporated areas within the jurisdiction. The cost to maintain those contracts has been rising. There is a concern that future contracts will exceed the County's ability to provide such services.

Grayson County contracts with our municipalities and with private entities to provide this coverage. However, one or more of those contracting parties have advised the County they no longer are willing to provide services in the unincorporated areas of the County or portions of the unincorporated areas. Developers are seeking to build high-density subdivisions in those unincorporated areas of the County.

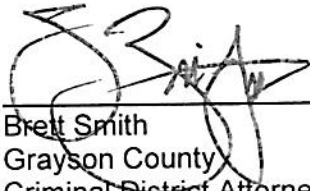
There is a problem on the horizon wherein Grayson County residents living in higher density subdivisions will not have emergency services, and the Grayson County will not have the ability to provide services due to costs and/or a lack of contracting parties.

Grayson County is seeking opinion from the Attorney General to advise as to the following:

- 1) Whether Grayson County has a legal obligation to provide emergency services (fire and ambulance) to its residents living in the unincorporated areas;
- 2) Whether Grayson County must provide emergency services (fire and ambulance) to residents when Grayson County has provided services to that area in the past, and
- 3) Whether Grayson County must provide emergency services (fire and ambulance) to higher density subdivisions when municipal partners refuse to extend coverage to those areas while Grayson County does have ongoing contracts with municipalities and private entities to cover other parts of the County.

This opinion is being sought in light of TEX. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 774.001, LOC. GOVT. CODE § 352.001 and TEX. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 774.003.

Sincerely,



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