

Subject Government data practices: personal information protections for public safety officers

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Overview

In the 2024 judiciary and public safety policy and supplemental finance act, the legislature passed new laws prohibiting the dissemination of certain personal information regarding judges and court staff. See [Laws 2024, ch. 123, art. 12](#). Those laws also defined what personal information would be restricted, classified the information as private data when it is maintained by a government entity, provided a mechanism for judicial officials to seek deletion of personal information published online, and created civil and criminal remedies for violations.

This bill would duplicate those existing protections for judicial officials and apply them to “public safety officers,” as defined in the bill.

Summary

Section	Description
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| 1 | <p>Judicial official and public safety officer data; personal information.</p> <p>Amends the existing section of the Government Data Practices Act (“GDPA”) classifying the personal information of judicial officials as private data, to extend those same protections to public safety officers. Civil remedies under the GDPA are only available for a violation of this section if the public safety officer previously notified the government entity that he or she was eligible for protection under this section. A notification form is classified as private data.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Dissemination of personal information about certain persons involved in public safety prohibited; penalty.</p> <p>Amends an existing criminal statute to also include correctional officers. Also aligns penalty levels in the statute with the criminal statute for publishing personal information of judicial officials (§ 609.476), which was created in 2024 Laws, chapter 123, article 12.</p> |

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3	<p>Personal information; dissemination.</p> <p>This creates a new law prohibiting the dissemination of personal information about public safety officers. This section mirrors the existing statute for judicial officials at § 480.40.</p>
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Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines key terms, including “public safety officer” (which includes both correctional officers and peace officers) and “personal information.”

Subd. 2. Dissemination of personal information. Prohibits any person, business, association, or government entity from disseminating personal information of public safety officers. Allows dissemination pursuant to specific authorization in law or with written consent of the officer.

Subd. 3. Exceptions. Creates exceptions for: speech on matters of public concerns (i.e. news articles where the personal information is relevant); personal information a public safety officer voluntarily disseminates after enactment of the law; personal information contained in real property records; etc.

4	<p>Removal of personal information.</p> <p>Provides a mechanism for public safety officers to seek deletion of personal information published online. This section mirrors the existing statute for judicial officials at § 480.45.</p>
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Subd. 1. Internet dissemination. Provides that, if a public safety officer’s personal information is made available online, the officer can notify the person responsible by sworn affidavit that the person is a public safety officer.

Subd. 2. Removal of personal information. Requires removal of the personal information within 30 days and allows a public safety officer to seek a court order compelling compliance. An exception for certain real property records is included.

Subd. 3. Penalties and damages. Authorizes a court to award damages, costs, and attorney fees to an officer if a person violates an order for injunctive or declaratory relief issued under subdivision 2.



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