

1976 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. 333 (S.C.A.G.), 1976 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 4471, 1976 WL 23088

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

Opinion No. 4471

October 1, 1976

*1 The Children's Bureau may release group statistical summaries or compilations from its adoption records and files.

TO: Mrs. Josephine A. Cannon
Executive Director
Children's Bureau of South Carolina

QUESTION:

Does Section 10–2587.14, Code of Laws of South Carolina, as amended, prohibit the release of group statistical summaries from the adoption files of the Children's Bureau?

AUTHORITIES:

Sections 71–201, et seq., Code of Laws of South Carolina; Section 10–2587.14, Code of Laws of South Carolina.

1976 Annual Appropriations Act, Section 138.

Opinion No. ___, Atty. Gen. Op. (September 7, 1970).

DISCUSSION:

Section 10–2587.14, supra, makes the records and files of the Children's Bureau confidential and prohibits access except upon court order. Opinion No. ___, supra, (September 7, 1970). The preparation and release of group statistical summaries would in no way violate the confidential nature of these records or prohibition against access, since there would be no individual profile and no person except Children's Bureau staff would have actual access to the files. This interpretation is further supported by the statutes requiring annual reports from the Children's Bureau on its activities. See Section 77–210, supra, and 1976 Appropriations Act, Section 138. These annual report requirements clearly contemplate that the Children's Bureau will make summaries and compilations which will be public information.

CONCLUSION:

The Children's Bureau is not prohibited from using its adoption files to make and disseminate group statistical summaries and compilations of its activities.

Hardwick Stuart, Jr.
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