OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL · STATE OF TEXAS
JOHN CORNYN

April 3, 2000

Mr. Steven D. Monté
Assistant City Attorney
Criminal Law and Police Division
City of Dallas
1214 Main Street, Room 206
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2000-1269

Dear Mr. Monté:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act, chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID 135491.

The City of Dallas received a request for offense report no. 0160594-J. You have submitted the report for our review. One of the suspects listed in the report is a juvenile. You assert that the requested information is excepted from disclosure pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered your argument and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." This section encompasses confidentiality provisions such as Family Code section 58.007. Section 58.007(c) provides that "law enforcement records and files concerning a child . . . may not be disclosed to the public[.]" Juvenile law enforcement records relating to conduct that occurred on or after September 1, 1997 are confidential under section 58.007. The information at issue involves juvenile conduct that occurred after September 1, 1997. It does not appear that any of the exceptions in section 58.007 apply; therefore, the requested information is confidential pursuant to section 58.007(c) of the Family Code. You must withhold the information from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records at issue in this request and to the facts as presented to us. Therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at 877/673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.–Austin 1992, no writ).

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

Julie Reagan Watson
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JRW/cwt

Ref: ID#135491

Encl. Submitted documents

cc: Express Document Service
Post Office Box 821894
Fort Worth, Texas 76182-1894
(w/o enclosures)