



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

February 27, 2007

Mr. Ernesto Rodriguez
Assistant City Attorney
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza
El Paso, Texas 79901

OR2007-02304

Dear Mr. Rodriguez:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 272122.

The El Paso Police Department (the "department") received a request for information related to a particular incident. You contend that the department is not required to comply with this request pursuant to section 552.028 of the Government Code. In the alternative, you claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101, 552.130 and 552.147. We have considered your arguments and have reviewed the information you submitted.

Section 552.028 of the Government Code provides in part:

(a) A governmental body is not required to accept or comply with a request for information from:

- (1) an individual who is imprisoned or confined in a correctional facility; or
- (2) an agent of that individual, other than that individual's attorney when the attorney is requesting information that is subject to disclosure under this chapter.

(b) This section does not prohibit a governmental body from disclosing to an individual described by Subsection (a)(1), or that individual's agent, information held by the governmental body pertaining to that individual.

Gov't Code § 552.028(a)-(b). You state, and provide an affidavit supporting, that the requestor is the mother of an individual who is imprisoned in a correctional facility. *See id.* § 552.028(c) ("Correctional facility" is a place for the confinement of a person arrested for or charged with a criminal offense). You state that in discussing her request with the department, the requestor voluntarily indicated that she was requesting the information at issue on behalf of her son. Based on your representations, we agree that section 552.028 is applicable in this instance and conclude that the department may decline to accept or comply with this request.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records at issue in this request and limited 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).

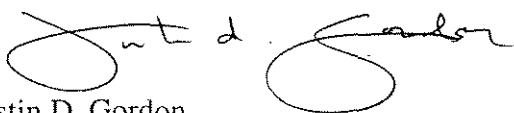
If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, 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 Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin D. Gordon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Justin D. Gordon
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JDG/krl

Ref: ID# 272122

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Rosa Camposano
1221 East San Antonio # 805
El Paso, Texas 79901
(w/o enclosures)