



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

April 12, 2007

Mr. Mark G. Mann
Assistant City Attorney
City of Garland
P. O. Box 469002
Garland, Texas 75046-9002

OR2007-04110

Dear Mr. Mann:

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# 275528.

The Garland Police Department (the "department") received a request for report numbers 2007R000546 and 2006R036307. You state that you have released some of the requested information. You claim, however, that portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses the common-law right of privacy, which protects information that is 1) highly intimate or embarrassing, such that its release would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and 2) not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668 (Tex. 1976). The types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation* included information relating to sexual assault, pregnancy, mental or physical abuse in the workplace, illegitimate children, psychiatric treatment of mental disorders, attempted suicide, and injuries to sexual organs. *Id.* at 683. We find that the department would normally have to withhold some of the information at issue under common-law privacy. However, as a parent of the minor with the privacy interest, the requestor has a

special right of access to information that would ordinarily be withheld to protect the minor's common law privacy, and such information cannot be withheld from him on that basis. *See* Gov't Code § 552.023(b) (governmental body may not deny access to person to whom information relates or person's agent on grounds that information is considered confidential by privacy principles).

You claim that the information marked in green is excepted from public disclosure under section 552.130 of the Government Code. In relevant part, section 552.130 provides:

(a) Information is excepted from required public disclosure if the information relates to:

(1) a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state; [or]

(2) a motor vehicle title or registration issued by an agency of this state[.]

Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1), (2). Ordinarily, the information you have marked would be excepted from disclosure under section 552.130. However, because this information belongs to the requestor's minor child, it may not be withheld in this instance. *See* Gov't Code § 552.023(b).

In summary, the department must release the submitted information to this requestor pursuant to section 552.023 of the Government Code. Should the department receive another request for this same information from a person who would not have a special right of access to it, the department should resubmit the same information to this office and request another ruling.

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,



Cindy Nettles
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CN/eeg

Ref: ID# 275528

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Curtis Rock
7402 Southwick Drive
Garland, Texas 75044
(w/o enclosures)