



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

November 19, 2010

Mr. William P. Chesser  
City Attorney  
City of Brownwood  
P.O. Box 1389  
Brownwood, Texas 76804

OR2010-17539

Dear Mr. Chesser:

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# 400777.

The City of Brownwood (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim 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."<sup>1</sup> Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes. Section 261.201(a) of the Family Code provides as follows:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act], and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

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<sup>1</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

(1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under this chapter and the identity of the person making the report; and

(2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

...

(k) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), an investigating agency . . . on request, shall provide to the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of a child who is the subject of reported abuse or neglect, or to the child if the child is at least 18 years of age, information concerning the reported abuse or neglect that would otherwise be confidential under this section. The investigating agency shall withhold information under this subsection if the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of the child requesting the information is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect.

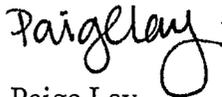
Fam. Code § 261.201(a), (k). Upon review, we find the submitted report was used or developed in an investigation of alleged child abuse. *See id.* § 261.001(1) (defining “abuse” for purposes of Fam. Code ch. 261); Penal Code § 22.04(c) (defining “child” for purposes of injury to a child as a person 14 years of age or younger). Accordingly, this report is within the scope of section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. Although the requestor is the father of the listed child victim, the report reflects the requestor is suspected of having committed the alleged abuse. Accordingly, we conclude none of the exceptions in subsection (k) apply to the submitted report. *See* Fam. Code § 261.201(k) (parental exception to section 261.201(a) inapplicable where parent alleged to have committed abuse/neglect at issue). Thus, the submitted report is confidential pursuant to section 261.201(a) of the Family Code, and the city must withhold the report in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 440 at 2 (1986) (predecessor statute). As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your argument against disclosure.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information 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 information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index\\_orl.php](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php), or call the Office of the Attorney General’s Open Government Hotline, toll free,

at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Paige Lay  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

PL/eeg

Ref: ID# 400777

Enc. Submitted documents

cc: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)