



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 6, 2010

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

OR2010-18268

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# 402084 (GCA 10-0737).

The Garland Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You state the department has released some of the requested information, but claim some of the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 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." Section 552.101 encompasses information protected by other statutes. The relevant language of section 58.007 of the Family Code reads as follows:

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records and files concerning a child and information stored, by electronic means or otherwise, concerning the child from which a record or file could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

(1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult files and records;

(2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as records or files relating to adults, be accessible under controls that are separate and distinct from controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and

(3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subchapter B, D, and E.

...

(e) Law enforcement records and files concerning a child may be inspected or copied by a juvenile justice agency as that term is defined by Section 58.101, a criminal justice agency as that term is defined by Section 411.082, Government Code, the child, and the child's parent or guardian.

...

(j) Before a child or a child's parent or guardian may inspect or copy a record or file concerning the child under Subsection (e), the custodian of the record or file shall redact:

(1) any personally identifiable information about a juvenile suspect, offender, victim, or witness who is not the child; and

(2) any information that is excepted from required disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, or other law.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c), (e), (j). Juvenile law enforcement records relating to conduct that occurred on or after September 1, 1997 are confidential under section 58.007. Section 58.007 allows the review or copy of juvenile law enforcement records by a child's parent or guardian. *Id.* § 58.007(e). However, any personally identifiable information concerning another juvenile suspect, offender, victim, or witness must be redacted. *Id.* § 58.007(j)(1). Section 58.007(j)(2) provides that information subject to any other exception to disclosure under the Act or other law must also be redacted. *See id.* § 58.007(j)(2).

You assert the submitted documents involve juvenile conduct occurring after September 1, 1997. Upon review, we agree the submitted information is subject to section 58.007. *See id.* § 51.03(a), (b) (defining "delinquent conduct" and "conduct indicating a need for supervision"). The requestor represents the juvenile offender; therefore, the department may not withhold the information pertaining to the requestor's client under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that ground. *See id.* § 58.007(e). However, because you also assert some of the submitted information is excepted under section 552.108

of the Government Code, we must address whether the submitted information is excepted under that section. *See id.* § 58.007(j)(2).

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” A governmental body claiming section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See Gov’t Code* §§ 552.108(a)(1), 552.301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the submitted information relates to a pending criminal investigation. Based on this representation, we conclude the release of this information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref’d n.r.e.*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases). Accordingly, we agree the department may withhold the information you have marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.¹

You assert some of the remaining information is excepted under section 552.101 of the Government Code. As noted above, personally identifiable information concerning a juvenile other than the requestor’s child in the submitted information must be redacted pursuant to section 58.007(j)(1). *Id.* § 58.007(j)(1). The remaining documents contain information that identifies a juvenile, other than the requestor’s client; therefore, the department must withhold this information, which we have marked, under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 58.007(j)(1). The remaining information does not identify a juvenile suspect, offender, victim, or witness, other than the requestor’s client; therefore, none of the remaining information is confidential under section 58.007(j)(1), and the department may not withhold any of it under section 552.101 on that ground.

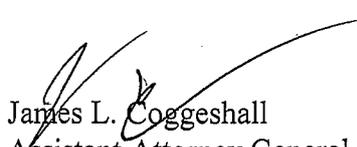
To conclude, the department may withhold the information you have marked in red under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.007(j)(1) of the Family Code. The department must release the remaining information.

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.

¹As our ruling is dispositive, we do not address your other arguments to withhold this information.

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, 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,



James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/tf

Ref: ID# 402084

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)