



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

January 13, 2011

Mr. Peter Scott
Assistant City Attorney
City of Wichita Falls
P.O. Box 1413
Wichita Falls, Texas 76307

OR2011-00684

Dear Mr. Scott:

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# 406088 (City ID# 355).

The City of Wichita Falls (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to specified incidents. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 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." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information made confidential by statute, such as section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. Section 261.201(a) provides as follows:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under Chapter 552, Government Code, 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:

- (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, and videotapes, and working

papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). Upon review, we find that the submitted information was used or developed in investigations into alleged child abuse under chapter 261. *See id.* § 261.001(1) (defining “abuse” for purposes of Family Code ch. 261); *see also id.* § 101.003(a) (defining “child” for purposes of this section as person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes). As you do not indicate the city’s police department has adopted a rule governing the release of this type of information, we assume that no such regulation exists. We, therefore, conclude that the submitted information is confidential pursuant to section 261.201(a)(2). *See Open Records Decision No. 440 at 2 (1986) (construing predecessor statute).* Accordingly, the city must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family Code.

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, 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,



Tamara H. Holland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

THH/tf

Ref: ID# 406088

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)