



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

January 20, 2011

Mr. David Daugherty
Assistant County Attorney
County of Harris
1019 Congress 15th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

OR2011-00998

Dear Mr. Daugherty:

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# 406557 (C.A. File No. 10GEN2593).

The Harris County Constable, Precinct Five (the "constable") received a request for a specified report involving a named individual. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.108, 552.130, and 552.132 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the information you submitted.

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 exception encompasses information other statutes make confidential. You claim section 552.101 in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code, which provides in part:

(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 [the Family 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 [chapter 261 of the Family Code] and the identity of the person making the report; and

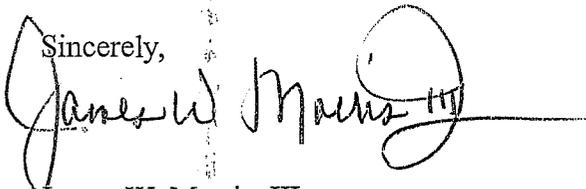
(2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under [chapter 261 of the Family Code] or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). We find the submitted information was used or developed in an investigation of alleged or suspected child neglect under chapter 261 of the Family Code, so as to fall within the scope of section 261.201(a)(2). *See id.* § 261.001(4) (defining “neglect” for purposes of Fam. Code ch. 261); *see also id.* § 101.003 (defining child for purposes of Fam. Code tit. 5). As you do not indicate the constable has adopted a rule that governs the release of this type of information, we assume no such rule exists. Given that assumption, we conclude the constable must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code.¹ *See* Open Records Decision No. 440 at 2 (1986) (addressing predecessor statute). We note that because section 261.201(a) protects all “files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers” relating to an investigation under chapter 261 of the Family Code, basic front-page information must not be released in such cases.

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,



James W. Morris, III
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JWM/em

¹As we are able to make this determination, we need not address your other arguments against disclosure.

Ref: ID# 406557

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)