



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

June 20, 2011

Ms. Janis K. Hampton
Assistant City Attorney
City of Bryan
P.O. Box 1000
Bryan, Texas 77805-1000

OR2011-08683

Dear Ms. Hampton:

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# 425850.

The Bryan Police Department (the "department") received a request for information related to case number 11-0401108. You claim that the requested 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 disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information if it (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). To demonstrate the applicability of common-law privacy, both prongs of this test must be demonstrated. *See id.* at 681-82.

The type 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. *See id.* Generally,

only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated that the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual's privacy.

In this instance, although you seek to withhold the submitted information in its entirety, you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the entire report must be withheld on the basis of common-law privacy. Therefore, the submitted information may not be withheld in its entirety under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.108(a)(2) excepts from disclosure "[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . it is information that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime only in relation to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication." Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate the requested information relates to a criminal investigation that has concluded in a final result other than a conviction or deferred adjudication. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must provide comments explaining why exceptions raised should apply to information requested). You state the submitted report relates to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Based on your representation and our review, we find section 552.108(a)(2) applies to the information at issue.

We note, however, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure "basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime." Gov't Code § 552.108(c). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic front-page information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). *See* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). We note basic information includes, among other items, the offenses charged and a detailed description of the offense. *See* ORD 127 at 3-4. Thus, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the submitted report under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. However, we note a portion of the basic information is protected by section 552.101 of the Government Code.

As noted above, section 552.101 encompasses common-law privacy. Upon review, we find the information we have marked is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Therefore, in releasing basic information under section 552.108(c), the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy.

In summary, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the submitted report under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. However, in releasing basic information, the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.¹

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,



Cindy Nettles
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CN/dls

Ref: ID# 425850

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹The basic information contains the arrestee's social security number. We note that section 552.147(b) authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person's social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office under the Act.