



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

July 27, 2011

Ms. Jameene Yvonne Banks
Denton, Navarro, Rocha & Bernal
2517 North Main Avenue
San Antonio, Texas 78212

OR2011-10823

Dear Ms. Banks:

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# 425117.

The Copperas Cove Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for all "arrest affidavits, police reports, and criminal files" involving a named individual. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.103, and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim. We have also received and considered comments submitted by a third party. See Gov't Code § 552.304 (providing that interested party may submit written comments regarding why information should or should not be released).

Section 552.101 excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." *Id.* § 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 established. *Id.* at 681-82. A compilation of an individual's criminal history is highly embarrassing information, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person. *Cf. U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. for Freedom of the Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 764 (1989) (when considering prong regarding individual's privacy interest, court recognized distinction between public records found in courthouse files and local police stations and compiled summary of information and noted that individual has significant privacy interest in compilation of one's criminal history). Moreover, we find a

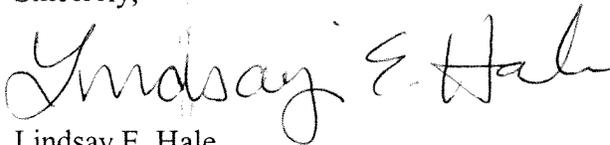
compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public.

The present request requires the department to compile unspecified law enforcement records concerning the individual named in the request, thus implicating the named individual's right to privacy. Therefore, to the extent the department maintains law enforcement records depicting the named individual as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold any such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments.

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,



Lindsay E. Hale
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

LEH/em

Ref: ID# 425117

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Ms. Jerris Penrod Mapes
Assistant City Attorney
Killeen Police Department (ID #W005772)
402 North Second Street
Killeen, Texas 76541-5298
(w/o enclosures)