



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

July 29, 2011

Mr. Rodolfo Ramirez
Assistant District Attorney
Fort Bend County
301 Jackson, Room 101
Richmond, Texas 77469

OR2011-10902

Dear Mr. Ramirez:

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# 427074.

The Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office (the "district attorney") received a request for a specified offense report. 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 information other statutes make confidential, such as section 261.201 of the Family Code. Section 261.201 provides, in relevant 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 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, 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 the submitted information consists of files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, or working papers used or developed in an investigation of alleged or suspected child endangerment under chapter 261 of the Family Code. *See id.* §§ 261.001 (defining “abuse” and “neglect” for purposes of Fam. Code ch. 261), 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). Therefore, this information is within the scope of section 261.201. You do not indicate the district attorney has adopted a rule governing the release of this type of information; therefore, we assume no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, we find the submitted information is confidential pursuant to section 261.201 of the Family Code, and the district attorney must withhold it in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code.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

¹As our ruling is dispositive, we do not address your remaining argument against disclosure.

Ref: ID# 427074

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)