



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

September 28, 2011

Ms. Amy L. Sims  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Lubbock  
P.O. Box 2000  
Lubbock, Texas 79408-2000

OR2011-14045

Dear Ms. Sims:

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# 431878.

The City of Lubbock (the "city") received a request for the name of the individual who made a specified complaint. You claim portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the information you have submitted to this office is not responsive to the specific request for information. The instant request is for the name of the individual who made a specified complaint, however, the submitted complaint form does not include the individual's name or any identifying information. This ruling does not address the public availability of this non-responsive information. Furthermore, the city need not release this information in response to this request.

Next, section 552.301 of the Government Code prescribes procedures that a governmental body must follow in asking this office to decide whether requested information is excepted from public disclosure. Pursuant to section 552.301(e), a governmental body is required to submit to this office within fifteen business days of receiving an open records request (1) general written comments stating the reasons why the stated exceptions apply that would allow the information to be withheld, (2) a copy of the written request for information, (3) a signed statement or sufficient evidence showing the date the governmental body received the written request, and (4) a copy of the specific information requested or representative samples, labeled to indicate which exceptions apply to which parts of the documents. As of this date, you have not submitted a copy or representative sample of the requested information.

Pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code, a governmental body's failure to comply with the requirements of section 552.301 results in the legal presumption the requested information is public and must be released unless the governmental body demonstrates a compelling reason to withhold the information from disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.302; *Simmons v. Kuzmich*, 166 S.W.3d 342 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2005, no pet.); *Hancock v. State Bd. of Ins.*, 797 S.W.2d 379, 381-82 (Tex. App.—Austin 1990, no writ); Open Records Decision No. 319 (1982). A compelling reason exists when third-party interests are at stake or when information is confidential under other law. Open Records Decision No. 150 (1977). You raise section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with the informer's privilege. Because the purpose of the common-law informer's privilege is to protect the flow of information to a governmental body, rather than to protect a third person, the informer's privilege, unlike other claims under section 552.101, may be waived. *See* Open Records Decision No. 549 at 6 (1990). Therefore, the city's assertion of the informer's privilege does not provide a compelling reason for non-disclosure under section 552.302. In failing to comply with section 552.301, the city has waived its claim under section 552.101 in conjunction with the informer's privilege. Thus, to the extent the requested information exists, you must release it at this time pursuant to section 552.302.<sup>1</sup>

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](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,



Sean Opperman  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

SO/dls

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<sup>1</sup>We note the Act does not require a governmental body to release information that did not exist when it received a request or create responsive information. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562S.W.2d 266 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dism'd); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 555 at 1 (1990), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

Ref: ID# 431878

Enc. Submitted documents

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c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)