ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

October 28, 2011

Ms. Jordan Hale
Assistant Attorney General
Assistant Public Information Coordinator
General Counsel Division
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, Texas 78711-2548

OR2011-15841

Dear Ms. Hale:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 434525 (PIR No. 11-31540).

The Office of the Attorney General (the "OAG") received a request for information pertaining to a crime victim's compensation application filed by the requestor's client. The OAG argues the information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the OAG's claimed exception and have 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 section 261.201 of the Family Code, which provides as follows:

> (a) Except as provided by Section 261.203, the following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act] 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.
>
> . . .
>
> (k) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), an investigating agency . . . on request, shall provide to the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of a child who is the subject of reported abuse or neglect, or to the child if the child is at least 18 years of age, information concerning the reported abuse or neglect that would otherwise be confidential under this section. The investigating agency shall withhold information under this subsection if the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of the child requesting the information is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect.

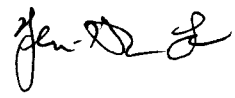
Fam. Code § 261.201(a), (k). The OAG explains the information was used or developed in an investigation of child abuse. *See id.* § 261.001(1) (defining "abuse" for purposes of chapter 261 of the Family Code); *see also id.* § 101.003(a) (defining "child" for purposes of section 261.201). Because the information is used as part of an investigation conducted under chapter 261, we find Exhibit B is confidential under section 261.201 of the Family Code. Although the requestor in this instance represents the mother of the child victim, the OAG may not release the information pursuant to section 261.201(k) because it is not the investigating agency. *See id.*§ 261.201(k) (permitting investigating agency to release information otherwise confidential under section 261.201(a) in certain circumstances). Thus, the OAG must withhold the information pursuant to section 261.201.

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,



Yen-Ha Le
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

YHL/sdk

Ref: ID# 434525

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)