



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

March 23, 2012

Ms. P. Armstrong  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Dallas  
Criminal Law and Police Division  
1400 South Lamar  
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2012-04339

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

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# 448469 (Dallas ORR# 2011-11994).

The Dallas Police Department (the "department") received a request for all reports pertaining to two specified addresses during specified periods of time. You claim portions of the submitted information are 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 representative sample of information.<sup>1</sup>

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. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 58.007 of the Family Code which provides in relevant part:

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records and files concerning a child and information stored, by electronic means or otherwise, concerning the child from which a record or file could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

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<sup>1</sup>We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent those records contain substantially different types of information than those submitted to this office.

- (1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult files and records;
- (2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as records or files relating to adults, be accessible under controls that are separate and distinct from controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and
- (3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subchapters B, D, and E.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c). Juvenile law enforcement records relating to delinquent conduct and conduct indicating a need for supervision that occurred on or after September 1, 1997 are confidential under section 58.007. *See id.* § 51.03 (defining “delinquent conduct” and “conduct indicating a need for supervision” for purposes of Fam. Code § 58.007). For purposes of section 58.007(c), a “child” is a person who is ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age. *See id.* § 51.02(2). Upon review, we agree the reports we have marked involve children allegedly engaged in delinquent conduct and conduct indicating a need for supervision that occurred after September 1, 1997. You do not indicate, nor does it appear, any of the exceptions in section 58.007 apply to this information. Thus, the marked reports are confidential in their entirety pursuant to section 58.007(c) of the Family Code, and the department must withhold them under section 552.101 of the Government Code.<sup>2</sup> However, you have failed to demonstrate the remaining information consists of juvenile law enforcement records which involve a child ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision. Therefore, none of the remaining information may be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 58.007 of the Family Code.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses information protected by other statutes. Section 261.201(a) of the Family Code provides as follows:

(a) Except as provided by Section 261.203, the 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

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<sup>2</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure for this information.

used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

*Id.* § 261.201(a). You seek to withhold a portion of the submitted information under section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. Upon review, however, we find you have failed to demonstrate how any of the remaining information at issue pertains to a report made or an investigation conducted under Chapter 261 of the Family Code. *See id.* § 261.001(1), (4) (defining “abuse” and “neglect” for purposes of Family Code ch. 261). Therefore, we find none of the remaining information is confidential pursuant to section 261.201 of the Family Code and the department may not withhold any of it under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body claiming section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the information you have marked relates to pending investigations and/or prosecutions and release of this information could hinder the criminal investigations and/or prosecutions. Based on your representations and our review, we conclude release of the information you have marked would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable generally to the information you have marked.

We note, and you acknowledge, 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 offense and arrest information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88. The department must release basic offense and arrest information, including a detailed description of the offense, even if the information does not literally appear on the front page of an offense or arrest report. *See* Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). We note basic information does not include motor vehicle record information encompassed by section 552.130 of the Government Code or the identifying information of witnesses. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.130; *see also* ORD 127 at 3-4. Thus, with the exception of basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold the information it has marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>As our ruling is dispositive for this information, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure.

Section 552.101 also 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. The type of information considered highly intimate or 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. In addition, this office has found some kinds of medical information or information indicating disabilities or specific illnesses are excepted from required public disclosure under common-law privacy. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 470 (1987) (illness from severe emotional and job-related stress), 455 (1987) (prescription drugs, illnesses, operations, and physical handicaps). Further, this office has concluded information that either identifies or tends to identify a victim of sexual assault or other sex-related offense must be withheld under common-law privacy. Open Records Decision No. 393 at 2 (1983); *see also Morales v. Ellen*, 840 S.W.2d 519 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1992, writ denied) (identity of witnesses to and victims of sexual harassment was highly intimate or embarrassing information and public did not have a legitimate interest in such information). Upon review, we find portions of the remaining information, which we have marked, are highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Therefore, the department must withhold this information pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, none of the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and a matter of no legitimate public concern. Therefore, we conclude the department may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 on that basis.

We note some of the remaining information is excepted under section 552.130 of the Government Code, which provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit, title, or registration issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release.<sup>4</sup> Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, the department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold the reports we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.007 of the Family Code. With the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the information it has marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy and the motor vehicle record

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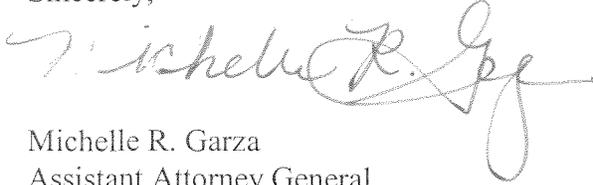
<sup>4</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception, such as section 552.130, on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released.<sup>5</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,



Michelle R. Garza  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

MRG/em

Ref: ID# 448469

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

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<sup>5</sup>We note the remaining information contains social security numbers. Section 552.147 of the Government Code 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. See Gov't Code § 552.147(b).