



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

June 12, 2012

Mr. Marc Allen Connelly
Deputy General Counsel
Texas Department of State Health Services
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

OR2012-09054

Dear Mr. Connelly:

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# 456217 (DSHS File 20151/2012).

The Texas Department of State Health Services (the "department") received a request for a specified complaint. You state the department has released or will release some of the requested information. You claim that 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.

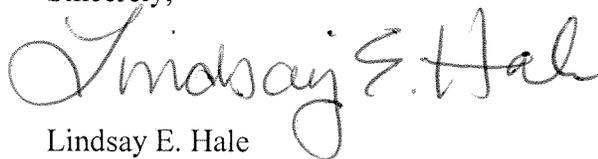
Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 of the Government Code encompasses the common-law right of privacy, which protects information 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 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. 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. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 440 (1986), 393 (1983), 339 (1982). Upon review, we agree the information you have marked is highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate concern to the public. Accordingly, the department must withhold the marked information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy. As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure of the information at issue.

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/ag

Ref: ID# 456217

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)