



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

June 14, 2012

Mr. Charles Weir
Assistant City Attorney
City of San Antonio
P.O. Box 839966
San Antonio, Texas 78283

OR2012-09198

Dear Mr. Weir:

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# 456505 (COSA File No. W006622)

The City of San Antonio (the "city") received a request for a specified offense report. You claim the submitted 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 made confidential by other statutes, including 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 [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, other than the [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services] or the Texas Youth Commission, 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.

(l) Before a child or a parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of a child may inspect or copy a record or file concerning the child under Subsection (k), the custodian of the record or file must redact:

...

(2) any information that is excepted from required disclosure under [the Act], or other law[.]

Fam. Code § 261.201(a), (k), (l)(2). We find the submitted information was used or developed in an investigation of alleged or suspected child abuse under chapter 261 of the Family Code. *See id.* § 261.001(1) (defining “abuse” for purposes of Fam. Code ch. 261); *see also* Penal Code §§ 21.11(a) (defining child for purposes of section 21.11 as an individual younger than 17 years of age), .011(c)(1) (defining child for purposes of section 22.021 as an individual younger than 17 years of age). Therefore, we determine the submitted information is generally confidential under section 261.201 of the Family Code. However, the requestor is a parent of the child victims listed in the submitted information and is not alleged to have committed the suspected abuse or neglect. Accordingly, the submitted information may not be withheld from this requestor on the basis of section 261.201(a). *See* Fam. Code § 261.201(k). However, section 261.201(l)(2) states any information otherwise excepted from required disclosure under the Act or other law must be withheld from disclosure. *Id.* § 261.201(l)(2). Therefore, we will consider your remaining argument against disclosure of the information.

Section 552.108(a)(1) excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if: (1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime.” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) 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 submitted information relates to an open investigation. Based on this representation and our review, we conclude release of the submitted information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of a 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 per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Therefore, section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code is applicable to the submitted information.

However, 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). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. See 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; see also Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of basic information, the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) 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,



Jessica Marsh
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JM/bs

Ref: ID# 456505

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹As noted, the requestor has a right of access under section 261.201(k) of the Family Code to the information being released. Accordingly, if the city receives another request for this information from a different requestor, it must again seek a ruling from this office.