



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

July 13, 2012

Mr. Darrell G-M Noga
Counsel for the City of Coppell
Fee, Smith, Sharp & Vitullo, L.L.P.
13155 Noel Road, Suite 1000
Dallas, Texas 75240

OR2012-10885

Dear Mr. Noga:

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# 459562 (Coppell ORR No. 10794).

The City of Coppell (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. 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.

Initially, we note a portion of the submitted information, which we have marked, does not relate to the specified incident and, therefore, is not responsive to the present request for information. This decision does not address the public availability of the non-responsive information, and such information need not be released in response to the present request.

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 the doctrine of common-law privacy. Common-law privacy protects information if (1) the information contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) the information is not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). 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. Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated that the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual's privacy. In this instance, the submitted information reveals that the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved as well as the nature of the information in the submitted report. Therefore, withholding only the individual's identity or certain details of the incident from the requestor would not preserve the subject individual's common-law right of privacy. Accordingly, to protect the privacy of the individual to whom the information relates, the city must withhold the responsive information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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,



Sean Opperman
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

SO/som

Ref: ID# 459562

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)