



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 24, 2012

Ms. Claire Yancey
Assistant District Attorney
Denton County
P.O. Box 2850
Denton, Texas 76202

OR2012-13476

Dear Ms. Yancey:

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# 463034.

The Denton County District Attorney's Office (the "district attorney's office") received a request for the district attorney's office's file for a named individual. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.108, 552.130, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exceptions and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.¹

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 exception encompasses information made confidential by other statutes, such as 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 Chapter 552, Government Code, and may be disclosed only for

¹We 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 that submitted to this office.

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.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). Upon review, we agree the submitted information was used or developed in an investigation of alleged child abuse under chapter 261. *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 as person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes). Therefore, this information is within the scope of section 261.201. You do not indicate the district attorney’s office has adopted a rule governing the release of this type of information; therefore, we assume no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, we conclude the submitted information is confidential pursuant to section 261.201 of the Family Code and must be withheld in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code.²

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,



Misty Haberer Barham
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MHB/som

²Because our ruling is dispositive, we do not address your remaining arguments against disclosure.

Ref: ID# 463034

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)