



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 18, 2013

Ms. Marivi Gambini
Paralegal
City of Irving
825 West Irving Boulevard
Irving, Texas 75060

OR2013-04431

Dear Ms. Gambini:

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# 481737.

The City of Irving (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to animals at a specified address during a specified period of time. You claim the submitted information is 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 encompasses section 826.0211 of the Health and Safety Code, which provides, in part:

(a) Information contained in a rabies vaccination certificate or in any record compiled from the information contained in one or more certificates that identifies or tends to identify an owner or an address, telephone number, or other personally identifying information of an owner of a vaccinated animal is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code. The information contained in the certificate or record may not include the social security number or the driver's license number of the owner of the vaccinated animal.

Health & Safety Code § 826.0211(a). Section 826.0211 applies only to information contained in a rabies vaccination certificate or in a record compiled from information contained in one or more rabies vaccination certificates. You state the submitted information contains information entered into a database by a pet owner. You explain the information entered by the pet owner is obtained from the animals' rabies vaccination certificates. Thus, the submitted information is compiled from rabies vaccination certificates. Based on your representations and our review, we conclude the city must withhold the information that identifies or tends to identify an owner or an address, telephone number, or other personally identifying information, which we have marked, under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 826.0211 of the Health and Safety Code. However, upon further review, we find the remaining information is not made confidential by section 826.0211 and may not be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 826.0311 of the Health and Safety Code, which states in part:

(a) Information that is contained in a municipal or county registry of dogs and cats under Section 826.031 that identifies or tends to identify the owner or an address, telephone number, or other personally identifying information of the owner of the registered dog or cat is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code. The information contained in the registry may not include the social security number or the driver's license number of the owner of the registered animal.

(b) The information may be disclosed only to a governmental entity or a person that, under a contract with a governmental entity, provides animal control services or animal registration services for the governmental entity for purposes related to the protection of public health and safety. A governmental entity or person that receives the information must maintain the confidentiality of the information, may not disclose the information under Chapter 552, Government Code, and may not use the information for a purpose that does not directly relate to the protection of public health and safety.

Id. § 826.0311(a), (b). Section 826.0311 applies only to the actual pet registry; it does not apply to the contents of other records, even though those documents may contain the same information as the pet registry. *See* Open Records Decision No. 658 at 4 (1998) (statutory confidentiality provision must be express, and confidentiality requirement will not be implied from statutory structure). Upon review, we find none of the remaining information is subject to section 826.0311 of the Health and Safety Code, and it may not be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis.

In summary, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 826.0211 of the Health and Safety Code. The remaining information must be released.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle R. Garza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michelle R. Garza
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MRG/som

Ref: ID# 481737

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)