



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

June 27, 2013

Ms. Elizabeth Hanshaw Winn
Assistant County Attorney
County of Travis
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767

OR2013-10963

Dear Ms. Winn:

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# 497227.

The Travis County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received two requests from different requestors for the report pertaining to a specified incident. 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 public disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses common-law privacy, which protects information that is (1) highly intimate or embarrassing, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person and (2) 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 demonstrated. *See 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. This office has found some kinds of medical information or information indicating disabilities or specific illnesses are excepted from required public disclosure under common-law privacy. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 455 (1987) (information pertaining to prescription drugs, specific illnesses, operations and procedures, and physical disabilities

protected from disclosure), 422 (1984), 343 (1982). Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated 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, you seek to withhold the entirety of the submitted information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the entirety of the information at issue must be withheld on the basis of common-law privacy. Accordingly, the sheriff's office may not withhold the entirety of the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis. However, upon review, we find portions of the submitted information, which we have marked, are highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Thus, the information we have marked must be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The sheriff's office must release the remaining information.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 497227

Enc. Submitted documents

c: 2 Requestors
(w/o enclosures)