



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

July 2, 2013

Ms. Rachel L. Lindsay
Brown & Hofmeister, L.L.P.
740 East Campbell Road, Suite 800
Richardson, Texas 75081

OR2013-11288

Dear Ms. Lindsay:

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# 496638.

The Little Elm Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to the sexual assault of a named individual. 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. This section encompasses the common-law right to privacy, which protects information if it (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is 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 met. *Id.* at 681-82. Common-law privacy protects the types of information held to be intimate or embarrassing in *Industrial Foundation*. *See id.* at 683 (information relating to sexual assault, pregnancy, mental or physical abuse in workplace, illegitimate children, psychiatric treatment of mental disorders, attempted suicide, and injuries to sexual organs). In Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983), this office concluded, generally, only information which either identifies or tends to identify a victim of sexual assault or other sex-related offense may be

withheld under common-law privacy. However, a governmental body is required to withhold an entire report when identifying information is inextricably intertwined with other releasable information or when the requestor knows the identity of the alleged victim. *See* Open Record Decision Nos. 393 at 2 (1983), 339 (1982), 440 (1986) (detailed descriptions of serious sexual offenses must be withheld).

The submitted information relates to an alleged sexual assault and the requestor knows the identity of the alleged victim. Therefore, withholding only identifying information from the requestor would not preserve the victim's common-law right to privacy. Accordingly, to protect the victim's privacy, the department must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure.

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,



Ana Carolina Vieira
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ACV/ag

Ref: ID# 496638

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)