



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 25, 2013

Mr. C. Tyler Atkinson
Assistant City Attorney
City of Fort Worth
1000 Throckmorton Street, 3rd Floor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

OR2013-16621

Dear Mr. Atkinson:

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# 505120 (P.I.R. No. W028442).

The Fort Worth Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to the requestor's client. You claim the requested 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 the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that (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). Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation. Id.* at 683.

In Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983), this office concluded that, generally, only that 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, because the identifying information was inextricably intertwined with other releasable information,

the governmental body was required to withhold the entire report. Open Records Decision No. 393 at 2 (1983); *see* Open Records Decision No. 339 (1982); *see also Morales v. Ellen*, 840 S.W.2d 519 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1992, writ denied) (identity of witnesses to and victims of sexual harassment was highly intimate or embarrassing information and public did not have a legitimate interest in such information); Open Records Decision No. 440 (1986) (detailed descriptions of serious sexual offenses must be withheld). In this instance, the submitted information demonstrates the requestor's client knows the identity of the alleged sexual assault victim. Therefore, withholding only identifying information from the requestor would not preserve the victim's common-law right to privacy. Accordingly, the department must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 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.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,



Tamara H. Holland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

THH/ac

Ref: ID# 505120

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)