



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

January 17, 2014

Ms. Judy Hickman  
Assistant Supervisor  
Police Records Division  
City of Beaumont  
P.O. Box 3827  
Beaumont, Texas 77704

OR2014-01140

Dear Ms. Hickman:

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# 511378.

The Beaumont Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a named individual. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.142 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.142 of the Government Code is applicable to records of certain deferred adjudications. Section 552.142 provides as follows:

(a) Information is excepted from [required public disclosure] if an order of nondisclosure with respect to the information has been issued under Section 411.081(d) [of the Government Code].

(b) A person who is the subject of information that is excepted from [required public disclosure] under this section may deny the occurrence of the arrest and prosecution to which the information relates and the exception of the information under this section, unless the information is being used against the person in a subsequent criminal proceeding.

Gov't Code § 552.142. Section 411.081(d) of the Government Code authorizes a person placed on deferred adjudication for certain offenses to petition the court "for an order of nondisclosure," which prohibits criminal justice agencies from disclosing to the public criminal history record information ("CHRI") related to the offense giving rise to the deferred adjudication. *See id.* § 411.081(d). Under this provision, a criminal justice agency may only disclose CHRI that is the subject of the order to other criminal justice agencies, for criminal justice or regulatory purposes; non-criminal justice agencies listed in section 411.081(i); or the person who is the subject of the order. *Id.* You explain, and have provided documentation reflecting, an order of nondisclosure was issued pursuant to section 411.081(d) of the Government Code prohibiting the release of the information at issue. Thus, we find the submitted information is generally subject to section 552.142 of the Government Code.

However, we note the requestor is a recruiter for the United States Army (the "Army") and the individual named in the request may be a potential enlistee in the Army. The United States Department of Defense (the "DoD") is authorized to perform background investigations of persons seeking to enlist to determine the eligibility of applicants for acceptance into the armed services. 5 U.S.C. § 9101(b)(1)(C); *see also id.* § 9101(a)(6)(A) (DoD is a covered agency for purposes of section 9101). The Army has a right to the criminal history record information ("CHRI") of state and local criminal justice agencies when its investigation is conducted with the consent of the individual being investigated. *See id.* § 9101(b)(1), (c); *see also* 10 U.S.C. § 111(b)(7) (DoD includes the Department of the Army). CHRI is defined as "information collected by criminal justice agencies on individuals consisting of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, indictments, informations, or other formal criminal charges, and any disposition arising therefrom, sentencing, correction supervision and release" but does not include "identification information such as fingerprint records to the extent that such information does not indicate involvement in the criminal justice system" or "records of a State or locality sealed pursuant to law from access by State and local criminal justice agencies of that State or locality." 5 U.S.C. § 9101(a)(2).

Federal law provides the Army's right of access to CHRI preempts state law. *Id.* § 9101(b)(4) (section 9101 "shall apply notwithstanding any other provision of law . . . of any State"). We conclude the Army's right of access under federal law preempts the state law you claim. *See English v. General Elec. Co.*, 496 U.S. 72, 79 (1990) (noting that state law is preempted to extent it actually conflicts with federal law); *see also La. Pub. Serv. Comm'n v. FCC*, 476 U.S. 355, 369 (1986) (noting that federal agency acting within scope of its congressionally delegated authority may preempt state regulation). However, federal law also provides the Army's right of access is contingent on the request being made for eligibility or retention purposes, and on receiving written consent from the individual under investigation for the release of such CHRI. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 9101(c). In this case, the Army has provided written consent from the individual at issue. Therefore, if the request is for eligibility purposes, the department must release CHRI pertaining to the named individual

to the requestor, but must withhold the remaining information under section 552.142 of the Government Code.

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](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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Luttrall".

Jennifer Luttrall  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JL/som

Ref: ID# 511378

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)