



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 18, 2014

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

OR2014-04577

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# 517033.

The Travis County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for incident reports pertaining to named individuals during a specified period of time at a specified address. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim.

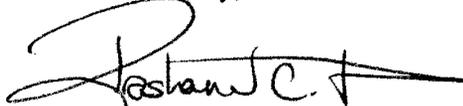
Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information if it (1) contains 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 established. *Id.* at 681-82. A compilation of an individual's criminal history is highly embarrassing information, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person. *Cf. U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. for Freedom of the Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 764 (1989) (when considering prong regarding individual's privacy interest, court recognized distinction between public records found in courthouses files and

local police stations and compiled summary of information and noted that individual has significant privacy interest in compilation of one's criminal history). Furthermore, we find a compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public. Upon review, we find this request requires the sheriff's office to compile unspecified criminal history records concerning the named individuals. Therefore, to the extent the sheriff's office maintains law enforcement records depicting the named individuals as suspects, arrestees, or criminal defendants, the sheriff's office must withhold any such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.¹

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,



Rashandra C. Hayes
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RCH/dls

Ref: ID# 517033

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of the submitted information.