



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 8, 2014

Ms. Cynthia Tynan
Attorney and Public Information Coordinator
Office of General Counsel
The University of Texas System
201 West Seventh Street
Austin, Texas 78701

OR2014-22187

Dear Ms. Tynan:

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# 545921 (OGC #158496).

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (the "university") received two requests from two different requestors for a specific incident report.¹ You state the university will release some information. You inform us you will redact some information pursuant to section 552.136 of the Government Code.² You claim some of the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

¹We note the university sought and received clarification of the second request. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (providing that if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify the request); *see also* *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for public information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

²Section 552.136(c) of the Government Code permits a governmental body to withhold the information described in section 552.136(b) without the necessity of seeking a decision from this office. *See* Gov't Code § 552.136(c). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.136(e). *See id.* § 552.136(d), (e).

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision.” See 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 satisfied. *Id.* at 681-82. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683. This office has found personal financial information not relating to the financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body is excepted from disclosure under common-law privacy. See Open Records Decision No. 600 (1992) (public employee’s withholding allowance certificate, designation of beneficiary of employee’s retirement benefits, direct deposit authorization, and employee’s decisions regarding voluntary benefit programs, among others, protected under common-law privacy.) Upon review, we find the information we have marked satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the university must withhold the information we have marked pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find you have failed to demonstrate how any of the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Thus, the university may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code on the basis of common-law privacy.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator’s license, driver’s license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. See Gov’t Code § 552.130. Upon review, we find the university must withhold the motor vehicle record information you have marked, and the additional information we have marked, under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the university must withhold the information we have marked pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The university must withhold the motor vehicle record information you have marked, and the additional information we have marked, under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released.³

³We note the requestors have a right of access to some information being released pursuant to section 552.023 of the Government Code. See Gov’t Code § 552.023(a) (“[a] person or a person’s authorized representative has a special right of access, beyond the right of the general public, to information held by a governmental body that relates to the person and that is protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect that person’s privacy interests”); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individuals request information concerning themselves).

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,



Rahat Huq
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RSH/dls

Ref: ID# 545921

Enc. Submitted documents

c: 2 Requestors
(w/o enclosures)