



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 12, 2016

Ms. Kristie L. Lewis  
Staff Attorney  
Houston Police Department  
1200 Travis  
Houston, Texas 77002-6000

OR2016-18232

Dear Ms. Lewis:

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# 622560 (ORU# 16-3795).

The Houston Police Department (the "department") received a request for information related to DNA testing for two specified report numbers. 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 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. *See Gov't Code* § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate the requested information relates to a criminal investigation that has concluded in a final result other than a conviction or deferred adjudication. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must provide comments explaining why exceptions raised should apply to information requested). You state the submitted information relates to closed criminal investigations that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Based on this representation and our review, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to the submitted information.

However, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. *Id.* § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). *See also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). This information includes, but is not limited to, the identity of the complainant. *See* ORD 127 at 4. Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

We understand you to assert the basic information is confidential in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. 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 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. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683.

The information at issue relates to alleged sexual assaults. In Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983), this office concluded generally, only the information that 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. ORD 393 at 2; *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). Further, in those instances where it is demonstrated the requestor knows the identity of the victim, the entire report must be withheld on the basis of common-law privacy. Upon review, we find you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the information at issue must be withheld in its entirety on the basis of common-law privacy. Thus, the department may not withhold the entirety of the basic information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, in this instance, the complainants are also the alleged sexual assault victims. Therefore, in releasing the basic information, the department must withhold the sexual assault victims’ identifying information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, you have not

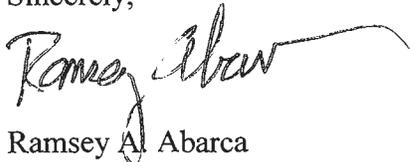
demonstrated any of the remaining basic information is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest; thus, none of the remaining basic information may be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

In summary, with the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. However, in releasing the basic information, the city must withhold the sexual assault victims' identifying information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code 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](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,



Ramsey A. Abarca  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

RAA/dls

Ref: ID# 622560

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)