



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 29, 2016

Ms. Alexis G. Allen
Counsel for Lancaster Police Department
Nichols, Jackson, Dillard, Hager & Smith, L.L.P.
1800 Ross Tower
500 North Akard
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2016-21991

Dear Ms. Allen:

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# 628604 (File Ref. #77976; Lancaster PD Ref. #W002272-071816).

The Lancaster Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You state you released some information. 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.

Initially, we note the submitted information includes a police officer's body worn camera recording. Body worn cameras are subject to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Chapter 1701 provides the procedures a requestor must follow when seeking a body worn camera recording. Section 1701.661 provides, in relevant part, the following:

(a) A member of the public is required to provide the following information when submitting a written request to a law enforcement agency for information recorded by a body worn camera:

(1) the date and approximate time of the recording;

- (2) the specific location where the recording occurred; and
- (3) the name of one or more persons known to be a subject of the recording.

Occ. Code § 1701.661(a). In this instance, the requestor does not provide the requisite information under section 1701.661(a). As the body worn camera recording at issue was not properly requested pursuant to chapter 1701, our ruling does not reach this information and it need not be released. However, pursuant to section 1701.661(b), a “failure to provide all the information required by [s]ubsection (a) to be part of a request for recorded information does not preclude the requestor from making a future request for the same recorded information.” *Id.* § 1701.661(b).

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts “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 is (1) highly intimate or embarrassing, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person and (2) 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. 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 courthouse 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.

You seek to withhold the remaining information in its entirety on the grounds that it requires the department to compile unspecified criminal history records. Upon review, however, we find the requestor is seeking certain information pertaining to a specified incident. Thus, the request does not require the department to compile an individual’s criminal history and does not implicate the privacy interests of the individuals at issue. Accordingly, the remaining information may not be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy as a criminal history compilation.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 730.004 of the Transportation Code, which provides that “an agency may not disclose personal information about any person obtained by the agency in connection with a motor vehicle record.” Transp. Code § 730.004. “Personal information” includes a person’s name, address, and driver

identification number, but not the zip code. *Id.* § 730.003(6). The Department of Public Safety (“DPS”) is an “agency” for purposes of chapter 730. *See id.* § 730.003(1) (“agency” is state agency that compiles or maintains motor vehicle records). You state the information at issue was obtained by the department from DPS. *See id.* § 730.007(a)(2)(A)(I) (personal information may be disclosed to government agency in carrying out its functions). An authorized recipient of personal information may not re-disclose the personal information and to do so is a misdemeanor offense. *Id.* § 730.013(a), (d). Accordingly, we find the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 730.004 of the Transportation Code.¹ However, we find the remaining information at issue does not consist of personal information about any person obtained by the department in connection with a motor vehicle record. Accordingly, the department may not withhold any portion of the remaining information under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 730.004.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses information protected by chapter 411 of the Government Code, which makes confidential criminal history record information (“CHRI”) generated by the National Crime Information Center or by the Texas Crime Information Center. *See Gov’t Code* §411.083(a). Title 28, part 20 of the Code of Federal Regulations governs the release of CHRI that states obtain from the federal government or other states. Open Records Decision No. 565 (1990). The federal regulations allow each state to follow its individual laws with respect to the CHRI it generates. *See id.* Section 411.083 of the Government Code deems confidential CHRI that the Department of Public Safety (“DPS”) maintains, except that DPS may disseminate this information as provided in chapter 411, subchapter F, or subchapter E-1 of the Government Code. *See Gov’t Code* § 411.083(a). Sections 411.083(b)(1) and 411.089(a) authorize a criminal justice agency to obtain CHRI; however, a criminal justice agency may not release CHRI except to another criminal justice agency for a criminal justice purpose. *Id.* § 411.089(b)(1). Other entities specified in chapter 411 of the Government Code are entitled to obtain CHRI from DPS or another criminal justice agency; however, those entities may not release CHRI except as provided by chapter 411. *See generally id.* §§ 411.090-.127. Thus, any CHRI obtained from DPS or any other criminal justice agency must be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with chapter 411, subchapter F, of the Government Code. We note CHRI does not include driving record information. *See id.* § 411.082(2)(B). Upon review, we find a portion of the remaining information, which we have marked, consists of CHRI that is confidential under section 411.083. Thus, the department must withhold the marked

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

information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 411.083 of the Government Code.²

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 id.* § 552.130. You assert the remaining video recordings contain motor vehicle record information that is excepted from disclosure under section 552.130. Upon review, we find the remaining video recordings contain confidential motor vehicle record information. In this instance, you state the department does not possess the technological capability to redact information from video files. Thus, we agree the department must withhold the remaining video recordings in their entirety under section 552.130 of the Government Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 364 (1983). Further, the department must withhold the additional motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.³

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which is subject to the two-part test discussed above. *Indus. Found.*, 540 S.W.2d at 685. This office has found personal financial information not relating to a financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body is generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 523 (1989) (common-law privacy protects credit reports, financial statements, and other personal financial information), 373 (1983) (sources of income not related to financial transaction between individual and governmental body protected under common-law privacy). In considering whether a public citizen's date of birth is private, the Third Court of Appeals looked to the supreme court's rationale in *Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts v. Attorney General of Texas*, 354 S.W.3d 336 (Tex. 2010). *Paxton v. City of Dallas*, No. 03-13-00546-CV, 2015 WL 3394061, at *3 (Tex. App.—Austin May 22, 2015, pet. denied) (mem. op.). The supreme court concluded public employees' dates of birth are private under section 552.102 of the Government Code because the employees' privacy interest substantially outweighed the negligible public interest in disclosure.⁴ *Texas Comptroller*, 354 S.W.3d at 347-48. Based on *Texas Comptroller*, the court of appeals concluded the privacy rights of public employees apply equally to public citizens, and thus, public citizens' dates of birth are also protected by common-law privacy pursuant to section 552.101. *City of Dallas*, 2015 WL 3394061, at *3.

²As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.

³As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.

⁴Section 552.102(a) excepts from disclosure "information in a personnel file, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." Gov't Code § 552.102(a).

Upon review, we find the information we marked satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Therefore, the department must withhold the information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. We note, however, although some of the remaining information contains the dates of birth of public citizens, the individuals to whom the information pertains have been deidentified and their privacy interests are, therefore, protected. Further, you have not demonstrated the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Accordingly, the department may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 on the basis of common-law privacy.

In summary, as the body worn camera recording at issue was not properly requested pursuant to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code, our ruling does not reach this information and it need not be released. The department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 730.004 of the Transportation Code. The department must withhold the marked information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 411.083 of the Government Code. The department must withhold the remaining video recordings in their entireties and the additional motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must withhold the information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must release the remaining information.

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,



Meagan J. Conway
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MJC/akg

Ref: ID# 628604

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)