



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

January 26, 2007

Mr. Miles K. Risley
Senior Assistant City Attorney
City of Victoria
P.O. Box 1758
Victoria, Texas 77902-1758

OR2007-00932

Dear Mr. Risley:

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# 272795.

The City of Victoria (the "City") received a request for specified police reports. You claim that 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 and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes. Juvenile law enforcement records relating to conduct that occurred on or after September 1, 1997 are confidential under section 58.007 of the Family Code, which provides in pertinent part as follows:

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records and files concerning a child and information stored, by electronic means or otherwise, concerning the child from which a record or file could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

(1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult files and records;

(2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as records or files relating to adults, be accessible under controls that are separate and distinct from controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and

(3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subchapter B.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c). Section 51.02(2)(A) defines “child” as a person who is ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age. Section 58.007 is not applicable to information that relates to a juvenile as a complainant, victim, witness, or other involved party and not as a suspect or offender. Although you raise section 58.007 of the Family Code as a basis for withholding the requested information, you have not explained, and the report does not reflect, how it constitutes a law enforcement record or file concerning a juvenile suspect or offender. Therefore, you may not withhold the requested information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.007(c) of the Family Code.

Section 552.108 of the Government Code provides in pertinent part:

(a) Information held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime is excepted from [required public disclosure] if:

(1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime;

(2) it is information that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime only in relation to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication.

Gov’t Code § 552.108(a). A governmental body has the burden of proving that the requested information must be withheld under the stated exception. Gov’t Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A). Although you raise section 552.108 of the Government Code as a basis for withholding the requested information, you have not explained, and the report does not reflect, how the requested information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). You also have not explained, and the report does not reflect, that the requested information deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime only in relation to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(2). Therefore, you may not withhold the requested information under section 552.108 of the Government Code.

However, we note that section 552.130 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that “relates to . . . a motor vehicle operator’s or driver’s license or permit issued by an agency of this state [or] a motor vehicle title or registration issued by an agency of this

state.” Gov’t Code § 552.130. Therefore, pursuant to section 552.130 of the Government Code, you must withhold the Texas driver’s license information that we have marked in the submitted documents.

Accordingly, with the exception of the Texas driver’s license information marked in the submitted documents, you must disclose the remainder of the requested information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov’t Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep’t of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori A. Cobos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Lori A. Cobos
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

LC/eb

Ref: ID# 272795

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Marc P. Garza
P.O. Box 1130
Victoria, Texas 77902
(w/o enclosures)