



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 6, 2007

Ms. Molly Shortall
Assistant City Attorney
City of Arlington
P.O. Box 90231
Arlington, Texas 76004-3231

OR2007-10014

Dear Ms. Shortall:

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# 287444.

The Arlington Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to the requestor's application to the department. You state that some of the requested information has been released, but claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Criminal history record information ("CHRI") generated by the National Crime Information Center ("NCIC") or by the Texas Crime Information Center ("TCIC") is confidential. 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 law with respect to CHRI it generates. *Id.* Section 411.083 of the Government Code deems confidential CHRI that the Department of Public Safety ("DPS") maintains, except that the DPS may disseminate this information as provided in chapter 411, subchapter F of the Government Code. *See Gov't Code § 411.083.*

Sections 411.083(b)(1) and 411.089(a) authorize a criminal justice agency to obtain CHRI, but 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.* §§ 411.090-411.127. Thus, any CHRI generated by the federal government or another state may not be made available to the requestor except in accordance with federal regulations. *See* Open Records Decision No. 565 (1990). We note that driving record information is not made confidential by the confidentiality provisions that govern CHRI. *See* Gov't Code § 411.082(2)(B) (definition of CHRI does not include driving record information). After reviewing your arguments and the submitted information, we have marked the CHRI that must be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with chapter 411 of the Government Code.¹ We find that you have failed to demonstrate that the remaining information is CHRI for the purposes of chapter 411 of the Government Code; therefore, the department may not withhold the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code, but instead must release it to the requestor.²

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).

¹We note that the requestor can obtain his own CHRI from DPS. Gov't Code § 411.083(b)(3).

²We note that the requestor has a right of access to information in the remaining documents that otherwise would be excepted from release under the Act. *See* Gov't Code § 552.023. Thus, the department must again seek a decision from this office if it receives a request for this information from a different requestor.

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,



James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/jb

Ref: ID# 287444

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Apolonio Araiza
1008 Atlanta Drive
Bedford, Texas 76022
(w/o enclosures)