



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 22, 2007

Ms. S. McClellan
Assistant City Attorney
Criminal Law and Police Section
1400 South Lamar
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2007-10938

Dear Ms. McClellan:

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# 287422.

The City of Dallas (the "city") received a request for information related to two named individuals and a specified address during a specified time period. You claim that portions of the requested information are 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.

Initially, we note that you have not submitted the requested citations or telephone recordings for our review. To the extent this information existed on the date the city received this request, we assume you have released it to the requestor. If you have not released any such information, you must release it at this time. *See Gov't Code §§552.301(a), .302; see also* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes that no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible).

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. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information if (1) the information contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) the information 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 demonstrated. *Id.* at 681-82. 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 that a compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public. The present request requires the city to compile unspecified police records concerning the individuals at issue. Therefore, to the extent the city maintains unspecified law enforcement records depicting the named individuals as suspects, arrestees, or criminal defendants, the city must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Common-law privacy also encompasses the specific types of information that are held to be intimate or embarrassing in *Industrial Foundation*. The types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation* included information relating to sexual assault, pregnancy, mental or physical abuse in the workplace, illegitimate children, psychiatric treatment of mental disorders, attempted suicide, and injuries to sexual organs. *Id.* at 683. In addition, this office has found that the following types of information are excepted from required public disclosure under common-law privacy: some kinds of medical information or information indicating disabilities or specific illnesses, *see* Open Records Decision Nos. 470 (1987) (illness from severe emotional and job-related stress), 455 (1987) (prescription drugs, illnesses, operations, and physical handicaps); personal financial information not relating to the financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body, *see* Open Records Decision Nos. 600 (1992), 545 (1990); and identities of victims of sexual abuse, *see* Open Records Decision Nos. 440 (1986), 393 (1983), 339 (1982). We have marked information that the city must withhold under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.101 encompasses other statutes, including section 772.318 of the Health and Safety Code. You contend that an originating telephone number of a 911 caller, contained in the submitted 911 call reports, is excepted under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 772.318. Chapter 772 of the Health and Safety Code relates to local emergency communications districts. Section 772.318 applies to an emergency 911 district established in accordance with chapter 772, and makes confidential the originating telephone numbers and addresses of 911 callers that are furnished by a service supplier. *See* Open Records Decision No. 649 (1996). You state that the City of Dallas is part of an emergency communication district that was established under section 772.318 and that the 911 caller's telephone number was provided by a 911 service provider.¹ Thus, based on your representations and our review, we determine that the telephone number we have marked in the 911 call reports is excepted from public disclosure under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 772.318 of the Health and Safety Code.

¹Section 772.318 applies to an emergency communication district for a county with a population of more than 20,000.

You claim that a portion of the remaining information is subject to section 552.108 of the Government Code. Section 552.108(a) excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if: (1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime.” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See* Gov’t Code §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state that incident report number 0393421-T, which you have marked, relates to a pending criminal case. Based upon this representation, we conclude that the release of this information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g 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) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases).

However, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. Gov’t Code § 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), and includes a detailed description of the offense. With the exception of basic information, the city may withhold incident report number 0393421-T, which you have marked, under section 552.108(a)(1).

In summary, to the extent the city maintains any law enforcement records that depict the named individuals as suspects, arrestees, or criminal defendants, the city must withhold any such information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy. The city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 with common-law privacy. The city must withhold the telephone number we have marked in the submitted 911 call reports under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 772.318 of the Government Code. With the exception of basic information, incident report number 0393421-T may be withheld under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released.

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,



Jordan Johnson
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JJ/jb

Ref: ID# 287422

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Brian Roberson
3127 Main Street
Frisco, Texas 75034
(w/o enclosures)