



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

February 9, 2010

Ms. Sheri Bryce Dye
Assistant District Attorney
Bexar County
300 Dolorosa 4th Floor
San Antonio, Texas 78205

OR2011-01967

Dear Ms. Dye:

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# 408549.

The Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory (the "county") received a request for information. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.103, 552.107, 552.108, 552.117, and 552.1175 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exceptions you claim.

We must address the county's obligations under section 552.301 of the Government Code, which prescribes the procedures that a governmental body must follow in asking this office to decide whether requested information is excepted from public disclosure. Pursuant to section 552.301(e) of the Government Code, the governmental body is required to submit to this office within fifteen business days of receiving the request (1) general written comments stating the reasons why the stated exceptions apply that would allow the information to be withheld, (2) a copy of the written request for information, (3) a signed statement or sufficient evidence showing the date the governmental body received the written request, and (4) a copy of the specific information requested or representative samples, labeled to indicate which exceptions apply to which parts of the documents. Gov't Code § 552.301(e). You inform us that you received the request for information on November 17, 2010. However, as of the date of this letter, you have not submitted to this office a copy of the written request for information, comments explaining why the stated exceptions apply, or a copy or

¹Although you raise section 552.022 of the Government Code, we note that section 552.022 is not an exception to disclosure, but a list of categories of information that are not excepted from disclosure unless they are expressly confidential under other law. See Gov't Code § 552.022.

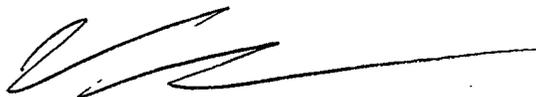
representative sample of the information requested. Consequently, we find the county failed to comply with the procedural requirements of section 552.301 of the Government Code.

Pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code, a governmental body's failure to comply with the requirements of section 552.301 results in the legal presumption that the requested information is public and must be released unless the governmental body demonstrates a compelling reason to withhold the information from disclosure. *See id.* § 552.302; *Simmons v. Kuzmich*, 166 S.W.3d 342, 350 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2005, no pet.); *Hancock v. State Bd. of Ins.*, 797 S.W.2d 379, 381 (Tex. App.—Austin 1990, no writ); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 630 (1994). A compelling reason exists when third-party interests are at stake or when information is confidential by law. Open Records Decision No. 150 (1977). Because the county has failed to comply with the requirements of the Act, the county has waived all of its claimed discretionary exceptions to disclosure. *See* Open Records Decision No. 663 at 5 (1999) (untimely request for decision resulted in waiver of discretionary exceptions). Although the county also raises mandatory exceptions to disclosure, because you have not submitted the requested information for our review, we have no basis for finding any of the information confidential by law. Therefore, we conclude the county must release the requested information pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code. If you believe the information is confidential and may not lawfully be released, you must challenge this ruling in court pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code.

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.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, 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 must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Vanessa Burgess
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

VB/dls

Ref: ID# 408549

No submitted documents

c: Requestor