



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

February 14, 2011

Mr. Dallas Tharpe  
Civil Assistant District Attorney  
Smith County District Attorney  
Smith County Courthouse  
100 North Broadway, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tyler, Texas 75702

OR2011-02195

Dear Mr. Tharpe:

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# 409104.

The Smith County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff") received a request for a specified incident report. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.103, and 552.108 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> We have considered the exceptions 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." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 58.007 of the Family Code, which makes confidential juvenile law enforcement records relating to conduct that occurred on or after September 1, 1997. The relevant language of section 58.007 reads:

(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:

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<sup>1</sup>Although you also raise section 552.1175 of the Government Code, you make no arguments to support this exception. Accordingly, we assume you have withdrawn your claim under this exception. See Gov't Code § 552.301(e) (governmental body must provide comments explaining why exceptions raised should apply to information requested).

- (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 Subchapters B, D, and E.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c). For purposes of section 58.007(c), "child" means a person who is ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age at the time of the reported conduct. *See id.* § 51.02(2). The submitted report involves a sixteen-year-old individual suspected of possession and/or delivery of marijuana. Thus, we find this report involves juvenile delinquent conduct. *See id.* § 51.03(a) (defining juvenile "delinquent conduct" for the purposes of section 58.007). It does not appear any of the exceptions in section 58.007 of the Family Code apply. Therefore, we find the submitted information is confidential under section 58.007(c) of the Family Code and the sheriff must withhold it under section 552.101 of the Government Code.<sup>2</sup>

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](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,



Tamara Wilcox  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

TW/vb

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<sup>2</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure.

Ref: ID# 409104

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)