



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

March 18, 2011

Ms. Jessica Sangsvang
Assistant City Attorney
City of Fort Worth
1000 Throckmorton Street 3rd Floor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

OR2011-03747

Dear Ms. Sangsvang:

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# 416690 (PIR No. W006873).

The City of Fort Worth (the "city") received a request for information relating to a specified police investigation involving two named individuals. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the information you submitted.¹

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. This exception encompasses common-law privacy and excepts from disclosure private facts about an individual. *See Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668 (Tex. 1976). Information is excepted from required public disclosure by a common-law right of privacy if the information (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is not of legitimate concern to the public. *Id.* at 685.

In Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983), this office concluded that generally only the information that either identifies or tends to identify a victim of sexual assault or other

¹You state social security numbers and Texas motor vehicle record information have been redacted from the submitted records pursuant to section 552.147(b) of the Government Code and previous determinations issued under section 552.130 of the Government Code. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.130, .147; Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) (previous determinations).

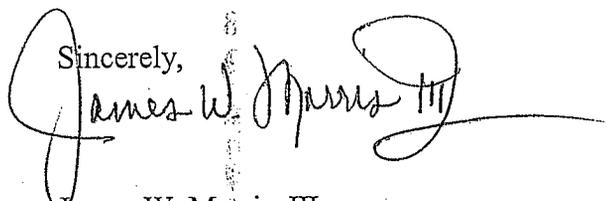
sex-related offense may be withheld under common-law privacy; however, because the identifying information was inextricably intertwined with other releasable information, the governmental body was required to withhold the entire report. ORD 393 at 2; *see* Open Records Decision No. 339 (1982); *see also Morales v. Ellen*, 840 S.W.2d 519 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1992, writ denied) (identity of witnesses to and victims of sexual harassment was highly intimate or embarrassing information, and public did not have a legitimate interest in such information); Open Records Decision No. 440 (1986) (detailed descriptions of serious sexual offenses must be withheld).

The submitted information consists of records of an investigation of an alleged sexual assault, and the requestor knows the identity of the alleged victim. We believe that, in this instance, withholding only identifying information from the requestor would not preserve the victim's common-law right to privacy. We therefore conclude the city must withhold the submitted information from this requestor in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. As we are able to make this determination, we need not address your other arguments against disclosure.

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,



James W. Morris, III
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JWM/em

Ref: ID# 416690

Enc: Submitted information

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)