



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

February 5, 2014

Ms. Michele Tapia
Assistant City Attorney
Office of the City Attorney
City of Carrollton
1945 East Jackson Road
Carrollton, Texas 75006

OR2014-02185

Dear Ms. Tapia:

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# 513075 (City ID# 1573).

The City of Carrollton (the "city") received a request for all reports pertaining to a specified address during a specified time period.¹ You claim 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.

Initially, you acknowledge, and we agree, the city did not comply with the procedural requirements of section 552.301 of the Government Code in requesting this decision. See Gov't Code § 552.301(b), (e). Pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code, a governmental body's failure to comply with the requirements of section 552.301 of the Government Code results in the legal presumption the requested information is public and must be released unless a compelling reason exists to withhold the information from disclosure. *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).

¹We note the city sought and received clarification from the requestor regarding the request. See Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (stating if information requested is unclear to governmental body or if large amount of information has been requested, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify or narrow request, but may not inquire into purpose for which information will be used).

Generally, a compelling reason to withhold information exists where some other source of law makes the information confidential or where third-party interests are at stake. Open Records Decision No. 150 at 2 (1977). Because section 552.101 of the Government Code can provide a compelling reason for non-disclosure under section 552.302, we will address your arguments under that exception.

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 section encompasses information protected by section 261.201 of the Family Code, which provides in relevant part:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act], and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

(1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under this chapter and the identity of the person making the report; and

(2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). Upon review, we agree Exhibit B and audio recording P2013000646 were used or developed in an investigation by the city's police department (the "department") of alleged or suspected child abuse. *See id.* § 261.001(1)(A) (defining "abuse" for purposes of chapter 261 of the Family Code); *see also id.* § 101.003(a) (defining "child" for purposes of chapter 261). You do not indicate the department has adopted a regulation regarding the release of this type of information; therefore, we assume no such regulation exists. Therefore, Exhibit B and audio recording P2013000646 are confidential under section 261.201 of the Family Code and must be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that is (1) highly intimate or embarrassing, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) 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 satisfied. *Id.* at 681-82. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683. Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987). Upon review, we find the information you have marked, and the additional information we have marked and indicated, satisfy the standard articulated by the

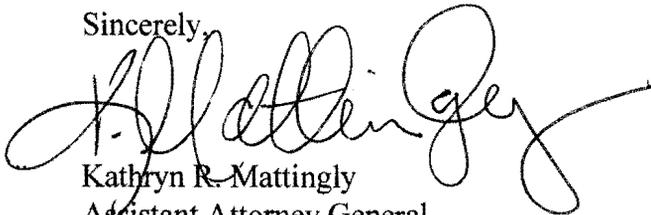
Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the city must withhold the marked information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find none of the remaining information is both highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Accordingly, the city may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 on that basis.

In summary, the city must withhold Exhibit B and audio recording P2013000646 under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code. The city must withhold the information you have marked, and the additional information we have marked and indicated, under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The city must release the remaining information to the requestor.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Kathryn R. Mattingly
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KRM/bhf

Ref: ID# 513075

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)