



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

April 28, 2014

Mr. Daniel Ortiz
Assistant City Attorney
City of El Paso
P.O. Box 1890
El Paso, Texas 79950-1890

OR2014-06998

Dear Mr. Ortiz:

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# 520839 (EP PD# 14-1026-4058).

The El Paso Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a named individual regarding three specified incidents. You inform us you do not have any information responsive to one of the specified incidents.¹ You also inform us you have released some of the requested information to the requestor. You claim the submitted information is 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.

Section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate the requested information relates to a criminal investigation that has concluded in a final result other than a conviction or deferred

¹The Act does not require a governmental body to release information that did not exist when a request for information was received or to prepare new information in response to a request. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266, 267-68 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

adjudication. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must provide comments explaining why exceptions raised should apply to information requested). You state the submitted information pertains to cases that concluded in results other than a conviction or deferred adjudication. Therefore, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to the submitted information.

However, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. *Id.* § 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). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, you may generally withhold the submitted information from disclosure based on section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

We understand you to assert the basic information in report number 06020582 is confidential in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. 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. This section encompasses the common-law right to privacy, which protects information if it (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. *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 met. *Id.* at 681-82. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683. Upon review, we find you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the basic information must be withheld in its entirety on the basis of common-law privacy. Thus, the department may not withhold the entirety of the basic information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy. Further, we find none of the basic information is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Accordingly, the department may not withhold any of the basic information in report number 06020582 under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

We note the requestor is a representative of the Arizona Department of Economic Security/Child Protective Services and may have a right of access to some of this otherwise protected information. Section 411.089(a) of the Government Code provides a criminal justice agency is entitled to obtain from the Texas Department of Public Safety (“DPS”) any criminal history record information (“CHRI”) maintained by the DPS about a person. *See* Gov’t Code § 411.089(a); *see also id.* § 411.083(b)(1) (DPS shall grant criminal justice agencies access to CHRI). In addition, section 411.087(a) of the Government Code provides in part:

(a) [A] person, agency, department, political subdivision, or other entity that is authorized by this subchapter to obtain from [DPS CHRI] maintained by [DPS] that relates to another person is authorized to:

...

(2) obtain from any other criminal justice agency in this state [CHRI] maintained by that criminal justice agency that relates to that person.

Id. § 411.087(a)(2). CHRI is defined as “information collected about a person by a criminal justice agency that consists of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, and other formal criminal charges and their dispositions.” *See id.* § 411.082(2). Thus, the requested information may contain CHRI. However, a criminal justice agency that receives CHRI from another criminal justice agency pursuant to section 411.087(a)(2) may only receive such information for a criminal justice purpose. *See id.* §§ 411.083(c), .087(b); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 655 (1997) (discussing limitations on release of criminal history record information). Thus, to the extent the requestor in this instance represents a “criminal justice agency,” she is authorized to obtain criminal history record information from the department pursuant to section 411.087(a)(2) of the Government Code, but only for a criminal justice purpose. *See* Gov’t Code §§ 411.083(c), .087(a)(2).

A “criminal justice agency” is defined in part as “a federal or state agency that is engaged in the administration of criminal justice under a statute or executive order and that allocates a substantial portion of its annual budget to the administration of criminal justice[.]” *Id.* § 411.082(3)(A). “Administration of criminal justice” has the meaning assigned to it by article 60.01 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. *See id.* § 411.082(1). Article 60.01 of the Code of Criminal Procedure defines “administration of criminal justice” as the “performance of any of the following activities: detection, apprehension, detention, pretrial release, post-trial release, prosecution, adjudication, correctional supervision, or rehabilitation of an offender. The term includes criminal identification activities and the collection, storage, and dissemination of criminal history record information.” Code Crim. Proc. art. 60.01(1).

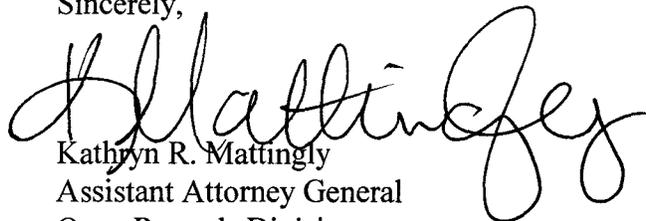
Therefore, if the department determines the requestor is requesting the information on behalf of a criminal justice agency and intends to use the criminal history record information for a criminal justice purpose, we conclude the department must make available to the requestor the criminal history record information from the documents, otherwise subject to section 552.108, that shows the type of allegation made and whether there was an arrest, information, indictment, detention, conviction, or other formal charges and their dispositions. *See* Open Records Decision No. 451 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exceptions to disclosure under the Act). In that instance, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

However, if the department determines the requestor is not requesting the information on behalf of a criminal justice agency or does not intend to use the criminal history record information for a criminal justice purpose, then the department is not required to release such information pursuant to chapter 411. See Attorney General Opinions DM-353 at 4 n. 6 (1995) (finding interagency transfer of information prohibited where confidentiality statute enumerates specific entities to which release of information is authorized and where potential receiving governmental body is not among statute's enumerated entities), JM-590 at 4-5 (1986); see also Open Records Decision Nos. 655 (1997), 650 (1996) (transfer of confidential information to federal agency impermissible unless federal law requires its disclosure), 440 at 2 (1986) (construing predecessor statute). In that case, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) 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.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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Mattingly', written in a cursive style.

Kathryn R. Mattingly
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KRM/tch

Ref: ID# 520839

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)