ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

October 27, 2014

Mr. John K. McKinney, Jr.
Assistant County Attorney
County of Montgomery
501 North Thompson, Suite 300
Conroe, Texas 77301

OR2014-19288

Dear Mr. McKinney:

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# 541237 (Open Records Request File 14PIA0392).

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for a specified police report and contact information for a named individual. 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 552.101 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 information protected by other statutes, including 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 find the submitted information was used or developed in an investigation of alleged or suspected child abuse. *See id.* §§ 261.001 (defining "abuse" for purposes of chapter 261 of the Family Code), 101.003(a) (defining "child" for purposes of this section as person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes). Accordingly, the information is within the scope of section 261.201 of the Family Code. You have not indicated the sheriff's office has adopted a rule that governs the release of this type of information. Therefore, we assume no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, we conclude the sheriff's office must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family Code.[1]

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,

Kenny Moreland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

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[1]As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of the submitted information.

Ref: ID# 541237

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)