



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 16, 2015

Ms. L. Carolyn Nivens
Paralegal for the City of League City
Ross, Banks, May, Cron & Cavin, P.C.
2 Riverway, Suite 700
Houston, Texas 77056-1918

OR2015-04992

Dear Ms. Nivens:

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# 556472 (Your File No. 3607-1).

The League City Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for a specified incident report. 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 "[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if: . . . (2) it is information that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime only in relation to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication[.]" Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate that the requested information relates to a criminal investigation that concluded in a final result other than a conviction or deferred 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 a department investigation that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. Based on your representation, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to the submitted information.

We note, however, section 552.108 of the Government Code does not except from disclosure “basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime.” *Id.* § 552.108(c). Basic front-page information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177, 186-87 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976), and includes, among other items, a detailed description of the offense. *See also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2).¹

Next, we address your argument the basic information is excepted from disclosure under common-law privacy. 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 the common-law right of 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 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. Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated that the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual’s privacy.

In this instance, although you seek to withhold the basic information in its entirety, you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the information must be withheld in its entirety on the basis of common-law privacy. Upon our review, however, we note portions of the basic information satisfy the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find you have failed to demonstrate the remaining basic information is highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Therefore, the department may not withhold the remaining basic information under section 552.101 on this basis.

In summary, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. In releasing

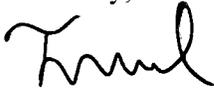
¹As our ruling is dispositive for this information, we need not address your remaining argument against its disclosure.

the basic information, the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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,



Tim Neal
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

TN/bhf

Ref: ID# 556472

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)