



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 1, 2015

Mr. John A. Haislet
Assistant City Attorney II
City of College Station
Legal Department
P.O. Box 9960
College Station, Texas 77842

OR2015-13173

Dear Mr. Haislet:

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# 569481.

The College Station Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to three named individuals. You state the department has released some of the requested information. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. *See* 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 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 relates to closed criminal cases that did not result in convictions or deferred adjudications. Based on your representations and our review, 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). *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 generally withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

However, we note the requestor states she is conducting a court-ordered social study. Accordingly, the requestor may have a right of access to portions of the requested information pursuant to section 411.1285 of the Government Code. Section 411.1285(a) of the Government Code provides, in part, that “[a] domestic relations office created under Chapter 203, Family Code, is entitled to obtain from the [Texas Department of Public Safety (“DPS”)] criminal history record information [(“CHRI”)] that relates to a person who is a party to a proceeding in which the domestic relations office is providing services permitted under Chapter 203, Family Code.”¹ *See* Gov’t Code § 411.1285(a); *see also* Fam. Code ch. 203 (governing administration of domestic relations offices). In addition, section 411.087(a) of the Government Code provides, in pertinent part:

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

Gov’t Code § 411.087(a)(2). We note 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). However, a domestic relations office may only receive CHRI if the information relates to a person who is a party to a proceeding in which the domestic relations office is providing services permitted under chapter 203 of the Family Code. *See id.* § 411.1285(a); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 655 (1997) (discussing limitations on release of CHRI).

As noted above, the requestor states she is conducted a court-ordered social study regarding the individuals named in the request. *See* Fam. Code § 107.051(b) (court ordered social study may be performed by domestic relations office). Therefore, if the department

¹A “domestic relations office” is defined as “a county office that serves families, county departments, and courts to ensure effective implementation of this title.” Fam. Code § 203.001(2).

determines the submitted information relates to a person who is a party to a proceeding in which services are being provided pursuant to chapter 203 of the Family Code, then, pursuant to section 411.1285(a), the department must make available to the requestor information pertaining to that person that shows identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, and other formal criminal charges and their dispositions, and with the exception of basic information, may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 451 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exceptions to disclosure under the Act). However, if the department determines the submitted information does not relate to a person who is a party to a proceeding in which services are being provided pursuant to chapter 203 of the Family Code, then with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. In either instance, the department must release the basic information.

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,



Nicholas A. Ybarra
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

NAY/cbz

Ref: ID# 569481

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)