



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 29, 2015

Ms. Jessica D. Richard
Assistant City Attorney
City of New Braunfels
424 South Castell Avenue
New Braunfels, Texas 78130

OR2015-22686

Dear Ms. Richard:

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# 591272 (New Braunfels PD Control No. 2932-15).

The New Braunfels Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified case number. 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 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 other statutes, such as section 58.007 of the Family Code. The relevant language of section 58.007 reads as follows:

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records and files concerning a child and information stored, by electronic means or otherwise, concerning the child from which a record or file could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

- (1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult files and records;
- (2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as records or files relating to adults, be accessible under controls that are separate and distinct from controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and

(3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subchapters B, D, and E.

...

(e) Law enforcement records and files concerning a child may be inspected or copied by a juvenile justice agency as that term is defined by Section 58.101, a criminal justice agency as that term is defined by Section 411.082, Government Code, the child, and the child's parent or guardian.

...

(j) Before a child or a child's parent or guardian may inspect or copy a record or file concerning the child under Subsection (e), the custodian of the record or file shall redact:

...

(2) any information that is excepted from required disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, or other law.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c), (e), (j)(2). Juvenile law enforcement records relating to delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision that occurred on or after September 1, 1997, are confidential under section 58.007. *See* Act of June 1, 2015, 84th Leg., R.S. ch. 935, § 18, 2015 Tex. Sess. Law Serv. 3224, 3233-34 (to be codified as amendments to Fam. Code § 51.03), Act of May 31, 2015, 84th Leg., R.S. ch. 944, § 4, 2015 Tex. Sess. Law Serv. 3268, 3269-70 (to be codified as an amendment to Fam. Code § 51.03(b)), Act of June 1, 2015, 84th Leg., R.S. ch. 1273, § 3, 2015 Tex. Sess. Law Serv. 4310, 4311 (to be codified as an amendment to Fam. Code § 51.03(b)) (defining "delinquent conduct" and "conduct indicating a need for supervision"). For purposes of section 58.007(c), "child" means a person who is ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age at the time of the conduct at issue. *See* Fam. Code § 51.02(2). Upon review, we find the submitted information is subject to section 58.007(c). In this instance, the requestor is a parent of the juvenile offender at issue. Therefore, this requestor has a right to inspect information concerning his child under section 58.007(e), and it may not be withheld from him under section 552.101 of the Government Code. *Id.* § 58.007(e). However, section 58.007(j)(1) provides any personally identifiable information about a juvenile suspect, offender, victim, or witness who is into the requestor must be redacted. *See id.* § 58.007(j)(1). However, section 58.007(j)(2) provides information subject to any other exception to disclosure under the Act or other law must be redacted. *See id.* § 58.007(j)(2). Thus, we will address your remaining argument under section 552.108 of the Government Code with respect to the submitted information.

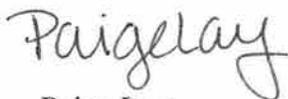
Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the submitted information pertains to a pending criminal case. Based on your representation, we conclude the release of the submitted information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) 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. Gov’t Code § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, you may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) 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,



Paige Lay
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

PL/dls

Ref: ID# 591272

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)