



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 9, 2015

Ms. Sylvia McClellan
Assistant City Attorney
Criminal Law & Police Section
City of Dallas
1400 South Lamar Street
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2015-23527

Dear Ms. McClellan:

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# 586471 (DPD Request No. 2015-13778).

The Dallas Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to two specified incidents. You claim portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.¹

Initially, we note some of the submitted information, which we have marked, is not responsive to the instant request because it does not pertain to the incidents specified in the request. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request and the department is not required to release such information in response to this request.

¹We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

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 doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that is (1) highly intimate or embarrassing, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person and (2) 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. Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987).

We note one of the submitted reports relates to an alleged sexual assault. In Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983), this office concluded that, generally, only information which either identifies or tends to identify a victim of sexual assault or other sex-related offense may be withheld under common-law privacy; however, because the identifying information was inextricably intertwined with other releasable information, the governmental body was required to withhold the entire report. ORD 393 at 2; *see* Open Records Decision No. 339 (1982); *see also Morales v. Ellen*, 840 S.W.2d 519 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1992, writ denied) (identity of witnesses to and victims of sexual harassment was highly intimate or embarrassing information and public did not have legitimate interest in such information); Open Records Decision No. 440 (1986) (detailed descriptions of serious sexual offenses must be withheld). The requestor in this case knows the identity of the alleged victim. Accordingly, we conclude withholding only identifying information from the requestor would not preserve the victim’s common-law right to privacy. Therefore, the department must withhold the sexual assault report we have marked in its entirety pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Additionally, we note the remaining responsive information contains dates of birth. Under the common-law right of privacy, an individual has a right to be free from the publicizing of private affairs in which the public has no legitimate concern. *Indus. Found.*, 540 S.W.2d at 682. In considering whether a public citizen’s date of birth is private, the Third Court of Appeals looked to the supreme court’s rationale in *Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts v. Attorney General of Texas*, 354 S.W.3d 336 (Tex. 2010). *Paxton v. City of Dallas*, No. 03-13-00546-CV, 2015 WL 3394061, at *3 (Tex. App.—Austin May 22, 2015, pet. denied) (mem. op.). The supreme court concluded public employees’ dates of birth are private under section 552.102 of the Government Code because the employees’ privacy interest substantially outweighed the negligible public interest in disclosure.² *Texas Comptroller*, 354 S.W.3d at 347-48. Based on *Texas Comptroller*, the court of appeals

²Section 552.102(a) excepts from disclosure “information in a personnel file, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.” Gov’t Code § 552.102(a).

concluded the privacy rights of public employees apply equally to public citizens, and thus, public citizens' dates of birth are also protected by common-law privacy pursuant to section 552.101. *City of Dallas*, 2015 WL 3394061, at *3. We note common-law privacy protects personal privacy. Thus, the requestor has a right of access to her information under section 552.023 of the Government Code. See Gov't Code § 552.023(a); Open Records Decision No. 481 at (4) (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individuals request information concerning themselves). Upon review, we find the information we have marked satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the department must withhold the information we have marked and, with the exception of the date of birth belonging to the requestor, all public citizens' dates of birth in the remaining responsive information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find the remaining responsive information is not highly intimate or embarrassing information or is of legitimate public interest. Therefore, none of the remaining information may be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 411.192 of the Government Code, which governs the release of information maintained by the Department of Public Safety ("DPS") concerning the licensure of an individual to carry a concealed handgun. Section 411.192 provides, in relevant part:

(a) [DPS] shall disclose to a criminal justice agency information contained in its files and records regarding whether a named individual or any individual named in a specified list is licensed under this subchapter. Information on an individual subject to disclosure under this section includes the individual's name, date of birth, gender, race, zip code, telephone number, e-mail address, and Internet website address. Except as otherwise provided by this section and by Section 411.193, all other records maintained under this subchapter are confidential and are not subject to mandatory disclosure under the [Act].

(b) An applicant or license holder may be furnished a copy of disclosable records regarding the applicant or license holder on request and the payment of a reasonable fee.

Gov't Code § 411.192(a)-(b). The information we have marked consists of concealed handgun license information obtained from DPS. In this instance, the requestor is neither the license holder nor a criminal justice agency. Thus, the department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 411.192 of the Government Code.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal

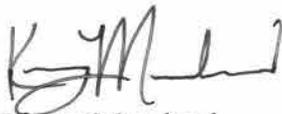
identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release.³ *See id.* § 552.130(a). Accordingly, the department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold the sexual assault report we have marked in its entirety pursuant to section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the information we have marked and, with the exception of the date of birth belonging to the requestor, all public citizens' dates of birth in the remaining responsive information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 411.192 of the Government Code. The department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining responsive 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,



Kenny Moreland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

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³The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481, 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

Ref: ID# 586471

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)