



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 11, 2016

Ms. Cary Grace  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Austin  
P.O. Box 1088  
Austin, Texas 78767-8828

OR2016-08021

Dear Ms. Grace:

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# 611747 (ORR# 03-04159).

The Austin Police Department (the "department") received a request for a specified case.<sup>1</sup> 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 representative sample of information.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, we note some of the submitted information is subject to section 552.022 of the Government Code. Section 552.022(a) provides, in relevant part:

(a) [T]he following categories of information are public information and not excepted from required disclosure unless made confidential under this chapter or other law:

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<sup>1</sup>We note the department sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also* *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or over-broad request for public information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

<sup>2</sup>We 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 that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

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(17) information that is also contained in a public court record[.]

Gov't Code § 552.022(a)(17). The submitted information contains a court-filed document, which we have marked, that is subject to subsection 552.022(a)(17) and must be released unless it is made confidential under the Act or other law. *See id.* The department seeks to withhold the information subject to section 552.022(a)(17) under section 552.108 of the Government Code. However, section 552.108 is a discretionary exception and does not make information confidential under the Act. *See Open Records Decision Nos. 665 at 2 n.5 (2000) (discretionary exceptions generally), 663 at 5 (1999) (waiver of discretionary exceptions), 177 at 3 (1977) (statutory predecessor to Gov't Code § 552.108 subject to waiver).* Therefore, the submitted court-filed document may not be withheld under section 552.108 of the Government Code. However, portions of the court-filed document are subject to section 552.130 of the Government Code.<sup>3</sup> As section 552.130 makes information confidential under the Act, we will consider the applicability of this exception to the court-filed document. We will also consider the argument under section 552.108 for the information not subject to section 552.022 of the Government Code.

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). The department states the remaining information pertains to a pending criminal case. We note, however, the remaining information includes a DIC-24 Statutory Warning and a DIC-25 Notice of Suspension. Copies of these forms were provided to the arrestee. We find the department has not explained releasing this information, which has already been provided to the arrestee, would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1).* Accordingly, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms may not be withheld under section 552.108(a)(1). However, based on the your representation and our review, we conclude the release of the remaining 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 77 (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. 976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the remaining information.

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

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). Accordingly, with the exception of the information subject to section 552.022(a)(17) of the Government Code, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms, and basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) 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. See Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, the department must withhold the submitted motor vehicle record information under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

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. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). 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. *Id.* 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.<sup>4</sup> *Texas Comptroller*, 354 S.W.3d at 347-48. Based on *Texas Comptroller*, the court of appeals 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. In releasing the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms, the department must withhold the public citizen's date of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

In summary, the marked court-filed document must be released pursuant to section 552.022(a)(17) of the Government Code. With the exception of the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms and basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The department must withhold the submitted motor vehicle record information under section 552.130 of the

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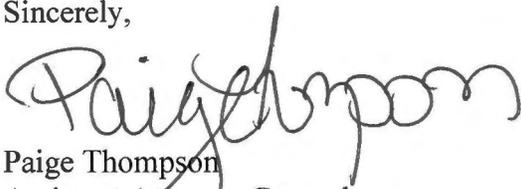
<sup>4</sup>Section 552.102(a) excepts from disclosure "information in a personnel file, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." Gov't Code § 552.102(a).

Government Code. In releasing the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms, the department must withhold the public citizen's date of birth 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](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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paige Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paige Thompson  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

PT/dls

Ref: ID# 611747

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)