



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 13, 2016

Ms. Yvette Aguilar
Assistant City Attorney
City of Corpus Christi
P.O. Box 9277
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9277

OR2016-08280

Dear Ms. Aguilar:

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# 605858 (ORR Nos. PRod3, PRod4).

The Corpus Christi Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a named individual, and a second request from the same requestor for incident report number 1601190143. The department indicates it has released some of the requested information, but claims the remaining requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exceptions 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. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing fact, 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. Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987). In

addition, a compilation of an individual's criminal history is highly embarrassing information, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person. *Cf. U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. for Freedom of the Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 764 (1989) (finding significant privacy interest in compilation of individual's criminal history by recognizing distinction between public records found in courthouse files and local police stations and compiled summary of criminal history information). Furthermore, we find a compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public. We note records relating to routine traffic violations are not considered criminal history information. *Cf. id.* § 411.082(2)(B) (criminal history record information does not include driving record information).

The first request seeks all information held by the department concerning a named individual. Therefore, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement records depicting the individual as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we note you have submitted information that pertains to a routine traffic offense. This information is not part of a criminal history compilation and may not be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy on that basis.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 261.201(a) of the Family Code, which provides as follows:

[T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act], and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

- (1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under this chapter and the identity of the person making the report; and
- (2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). The department asserts incident report number 1601190143 is confidential under section 261.201. Upon review, we agree report number 1601190143 was used or developed in an investigation of alleged or suspected child abuse. *See id.* §§ 101.003(a) (defining "child" for purposes of section 261.201 as person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes), 261.001(1) (defining "abuse" for purposes of chapter 261 of the Family Code). Thus, this information falls within the scope of section 261.201 of the

Family Code. Therefore, the department must withhold incident report number 1601190143 under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family Code.

As stated above, section 552.101 of the Government Code encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects the specific types of information the Texas Supreme Court held to be intimate or embarrassing in *Industrial Foundation*. 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.¹ *Tex. 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. Therefore, the department must withhold all public citizens' dates of birth in the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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 a personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. Gov't Code § 552.130(a). Upon review, we find the department must withhold the information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement records depicting the individual as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold incident report number 1601190143 under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. The department also must withhold the dates of birth of public citizens in the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining information.

¹Section 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).

The department also seeks a previous determination from this office allowing it to withhold information made confidential under section 261.201 of the Family Code without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office. We decline to issue such a ruling at this time. 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,



Amy L.S. Shipp
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ALS/akg

Ref: ID# 605858

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)