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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 14, 2016

Mr. Clark T. Askins
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P.O. Box 1218
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OR2016-13494

Dear Mr. Askins:

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# 613923 (PIR No. 16-825).

The La Porte Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident involving a named individual. 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 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. The types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683. Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual's privacy.

You assert that, in this instance, the requestor knows both the identity of the individual involved and the nature of the incident at issue. Furthermore, the department has revealed the nature of the incident at issue in its brief.¹ Therefore, withholding only the individual's identity or certain details of the incident from the requestor would not preserve the subject individual's common-law right to privacy. Accordingly, to protect the privacy of the individual to whom the information relates, the department must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.²

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,



Britni Ramirez
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

BR/dls

Ref: ID# 613923

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹In the future, the department should redact such information from its brief before sending a copy to the requestor. See Gov't Code §§ 552.301(e-1), .352(a) (person commits offense if person distributes information considered confidential under the Act).

²As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure.