



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

June 6, 2012

Ms. Susan Fillion  
Assistant County Attorney  
Harris County Attorney's Office  
1019 Congress, 15th Floor  
Houston, Texas 77002

OR2012-08651

Dear Ms. Fillion:

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# 455758 (CA File # 12PIA0144).

The Harris County Constable Precinct 5 (the "constable's office") received a request for case number HC 120034363. 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 261.201 of the Family Code, which provides, in relevant part, as follows:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under Chapter 552, Government Code, 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.

...

(k) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), an investigating agency, other than the [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services] or the Texas Youth Commission, on request, shall provide to the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of a child who is the subject of reported abuse or neglect, or to the child if the child is at least 18 years of age, information concerning the reported abuse or neglect that would otherwise be confidential under this section. The investigating agency shall withhold information under this subsection if the parent, managing conservator, or other legal representative of the child requesting the information is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a), (k). Upon review, we find the submitted information was used or developed in an investigation of alleged injury to a child conducted by the San Antonio Police Department. *See id.* § 261.001 (defining “abuse” for purposes of chapter 261 of the Family Code); *see also* Penal Code § 22.04 (defining “child” for purposes of injury to a child as a person 14 years of age or younger). Accordingly, we find this information is subject to chapter 261 of the Family Code. We note the requestor is a parent of the child victim listed in the information and is not alleged to have committed the abuse. However, the constable’s office is not the investigating agency for purposes of section 261.201(k). *See* Fam. Code § 261.201(k). Therefore, the constable’s office may not release the submitted information pursuant to section 261.201(k), and must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code.<sup>1</sup> *See* Open Records Decision No. 440 at 2 (1986) (predecessor statute).

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.

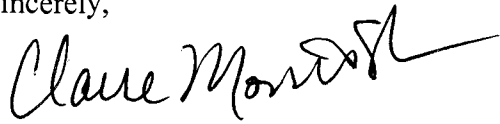
This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index\\_orl.php](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php), 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

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<sup>1</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure of the submitted information.

information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claire Morris Sloan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Claire V. Morris Sloan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 455758

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)