



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 1, 2016

Mr. James Kopp
Assistant City Attorney
City of San Antonio
P.O. Box 839966
San Antonio, Texas 78283-3966

OR2016-02367

Dear Mr. Kopp:

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# 601979 (SATX ORR ID# W107361).

The City of San Antonio (the "city") received a request for a specified police report. 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 information.

Initially, we note the submitted information includes court-filed documents that are subject to section 552.022 of the Government Code. Section 552.022(a)(17) provides for the required public disclosure of "information that is also contained in a public court record" unless it is "made confidential under [the Act] or other law[.]" Gov't Code § 552.022(a)(17). Although you raise section 552.108 of the Government Code, this 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 section 552.108 subject to waiver). As such, section 552.108 does not make information confidential for the purposes of section 552.022. Therefore, the marked court-filed documents may not be withheld under section 552.108. However, we note the marked court-filed documents contain information subject to section 552.130 of the Government Code. As section 552.130 makes information confidential for purposes of section 552.022(a)(17), we will address its applicability to the marked court-filed documents. Further, we will address your argument under section 552.108 for the remaining information.

Section 552.108(a) 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). You state release of the remaining information will interfere with a pending criminal investigation and prosecution. Based on this representation, we conclude section 552.108(a)(1) is generally applicable in this instance. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (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 curium*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). We note, however, the information at issue includes a DIC-24 statutory warning and a DIC-25 notice of suspension. The city provided copies of these forms to the arrestee. You have not explained how releasing this information, which has already been seen by 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.

Additionally, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure “basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime.” *Id.* § 552.108(c). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic “front-page” information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-187; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Accordingly, with the exception of the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms and basic information, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also 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.¹ *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. Thus, the city must withhold the public citizen’s date of birth we have marked in the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms under section 552.101 of the Government Code.

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).

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides that information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. *See Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1)*. Accordingly, the city must withhold the information we have marked in the marked court-filed documents and the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the city must release the court-filed documents we have marked 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, which must be released, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. In releasing the court-filed documents we have marked, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. In releasing the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms, the city must withhold the public citizen's date of birth we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy and the information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

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,



Jesse Harvey
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JH/eb

Ref: ID# 601979

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)