



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 11, 2016

Ms. LeAnn M. Quinn
City Secretary
City of Cedar Park
450 Cypress Creek Road
Cedar Park, Texas 78613

OR2016-05648

Dear Ms. Quinn:

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# 601152 (Reference No. 16-057).

The City of Cedar Park (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a named former employee. You state you will make some information available to the requestor. You state you will redact information pursuant to section 552.130(c) of the Government Code.¹ You claim portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.117, and 552.136 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.102(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information in a personnel file, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy."² Gov't Code § 552.102(a). The Texas Supreme Court has held

¹Section 552.130(c) of the Government Code allows a governmental body to redact the information described in section 552.130(a) without the necessity of seeking a decision from the attorney general. *See* Gov't Code § 552.130(c). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.130(e). *See id.* § 552.130(d), (e).

²The 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).

section 552.102(a) excepts from disclosure the dates of birth of state employees in the payroll database of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. *Tex. Comptroller of Pub. Accounts v. Attorney Gen. of Tex.*, 354 S.W.3d 336 (Tex. 2010). Upon review, we find the city must withhold the date of birth we have marked under section 552.102(a) of the Government Code.³

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 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. 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). This office has found personal financial information not relating to a financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body is generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 523 (1989) (common-law privacy protects credit reports, financial statements, and other personal financial information), 373 (1983) (sources of income not related to financial transaction between individual and governmental body protected under common-law privacy). Upon review, we find the information we have marked satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find the remaining information is not highly intimate or embarrassing information or is of legitimate public interest. Therefore, none of the remaining information may be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.117(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure the home address and telephone number, emergency contact information, social security number, and family member information of a current or former employee or official of a governmental body who requests this information be kept confidential under section 552.024 of the Government Code. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.117(a)(1). We note section 552.117 is also applicable to personal cellular telephone numbers, provided the cellular telephone service is not paid for by a governmental body. *See* Open Records Decision No. 506 at 5-6 (1988) (section 552.117 not applicable to cellular telephone numbers paid for by governmental body and intended for official use). Whether a particular piece of information is protected by section 552.117(a)(1) must be determined at the time the request for it is made. *See* Open Records Decision

³As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.

No. 530 at 5 (1989). Therefore, a governmental body must withhold information under section 552.117 on behalf of a current or former official or employee only if the individual made a request for confidentiality under section 552.024 prior to the date on which the request for this information was made. You have submitted the election form completed by the individual whose information is at issue, which reflects the individual timely elected to keep his information confidential. Accordingly, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.117(a)(1) of the Government Code; however, the marked cellular telephone number may be withheld only if a governmental body does not pay for the cellular telephone service. Further, we find you have failed to demonstrate any of the remaining information at issue consists of information that is confidential under section 552.117 of the Government Code. Therefore, no portion of the remaining information may be withheld on that basis.

Section 552.136 of the Government Code provides, “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential.” Gov’t Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). Upon review, we find you have not explained how the information you have marked consists of a credit card, debit card, or charge card number, or is an access device number used to obtain money, goods, services, or any item of value, or used to initiate the transfer of funds. *See id.* §§ 552.136(a), .301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must explain how claimed exception to disclosure applies). Therefore, we find you have failed to demonstrate the applicability of section 552.136 of the Government Code to the information at issue and the city may not withhold it on this ground.

Section 552.137 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “an e-mail address of a member of the public that is provided for the purpose of communicating electronically with a governmental body” unless the member of the public consents to its release or the e-mail address is of a type specifically excluded by subsection (c). *See id.* § 552.137(a)-(c). Section 552.137 does not apply to an institutional e-mail address, the general e-mail address of a business, an e-mail address of a person who has a contractual relationship with a governmental body, an e-mail address of a vendor who seeks to contract with a governmental body, an e-mail address maintained by a governmental entity for one of its officials or employees, or an e-mail address provided to a governmental body on a letterhead. *See id.* § 552.137(c). Upon review, we find the city must withhold the personal e-mail address we have marked under section 552.137 of the Government Code, unless the owner affirmatively consents to its public disclosure.

In summary, the city must withhold the date of birth we have marked under section 552.102(a) of the Government Code. The city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.117(a)(1) of the Government Code; however, the marked cellular telephone

number may be withheld only if a governmental body does not pay for the cellular telephone service. The city must withhold the personal e-mail address we have marked under section 552.137 of the Government Code, unless the owner affirmatively consents to its public disclosure. The city must release the remaining information.

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,



Kenny Moreland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KJM/som

Ref: ID# 601152

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)