



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 17, 2017

Ms. Akilah Mance
Counsel for the City of Dickinson
Olson & Olson LLP
2727 Allen Parkway, Suite 600
Houston, Texas 77019-2133

OR2017-05598

Dear Ms. Mance:

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# 649300 (Ref. No. COD16-035).

The City of Dickinson (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for all information related to a specified case. You state the city will redact motor vehicle record information under section 552.130(c) of the Government Code, social security numbers under section 552.147(b) of the Government Code, and information pursuant to Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009).¹ You claim portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception 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

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). Section 552.147(b) of the Government Code authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person's social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office. *See id.* § 552.147(b). Open Records Decision No. 684 is a previous determination issued by this office authorizing all governmental bodies to withhold certain categories of information without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision.

Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses information made confidential by other statutes, such as chapter 772 of the Health and Safety Code, which authorizes the development of local emergency communication districts. Section 772.318 of the Health and Safety Code applies to an emergency communication district for a county with a population of more than 20,000 and makes confidential the originating telephone numbers and addresses of 9-1-1 callers that are furnished by a 9-1-1 service supplier. *See* Open Records Decision No. 649 (1996). You state that the city is part of an emergency communication district that was established under section 772.318. You have marked a telephone number you seek to withhold. We conclude the city must withhold the telephone number you have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 772.318 of the Health and Safety Code if it consists of an originating telephone number furnished by a 9-1-1 service supplier. If the marked information does not consist of an originating telephone number provided by a 9-1-1 service supplier, it may not be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 772.318. You also argue to withhold telephone numbers provided in the submitted audio recordings. However, this information was provided directly by the 9-1-1 callers at issue. Thus, we find no portion of the submitted audio recordings consist of the originating telephone number or address of a 9-1-1 caller that was furnished by a 9-1-1 service supplier. Accordingly, no portion of the submitted audio recordings may be withheld under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 772.318 of the Health and Safety 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.² *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. We note the requestor has a right of access to his client's otherwise private information. *See* Gov't Code § 552.023(a) ("person's authorized representative has special right of access, beyond right of general public, to information held by governmental body that relates to person and that is protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect that person's privacy interests"); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individual

²Section 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).

requests information concerning herself). Thus, with the exception of the requestor's client's date of birth, the city must withhold all public citizens' dates of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

In summary, the city must withhold the telephone number you have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 772.318 of the Health and Safety Code if it consists of an originating telephone number furnished by a 9-1-1 service supplier. With the exception of the requestor's client's date of birth, the city must withhold all public citizens' dates of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. 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,



Tim Neal
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

TN/sdk

Ref: ID# 649300

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)