



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 20, 2017

Mr. Eric K. Miller  
Assistant General Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
P.O. Box 4004  
Huntsville, Texas 77342-4004

OR2017-08492

Dear Mr. Miller:

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# 654599.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to department correctional facilities and information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.134 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note you have only submitted information pertaining to the specified incident. Therefore, to the extent any other information responsive to the request existed on the date the department received the request, we assume you have released it. *See* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes that no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible). If you have not released any such information, you must do so at this time. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301(a), .302.

Section 552.134(a) of the Government Code relates to inmates of the department and provides the following:

Except as provided by Subsection (b) or by Section 552.029 [of the Government Code], information obtained or maintained by the [department] is excepted from [required public disclosure] if it is information about an inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under a contract with the department.

*Id.* § 552.134(a). Section 552.134 is explicitly made subject to section 552.029, which provides, in relevant part, the following:

Notwithstanding Section . . . 552.134, the following information about an inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under a contract with the [department] is subject to required disclosure under Section 552.021:

...

(8) basic information regarding the death of an inmate in custody, an incident involving the use of force, or an alleged crime involving the inmate.

*Id.* § 552.029(8). Upon review, we agree the submitted information constitutes information about an inmate for purposes of section 552.134. However, the submitted information pertains to an incident involving the use of force. Thus, the department must release basic information about this incident pursuant to section 552.029(8). Basic information includes the time and place of the incident, names of inmates and department officials directly involved, a brief narrative of the incident, a brief description of any injuries sustained, and information regarding criminal charges or disciplinary actions filed as a result of the incident.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of basic information, which must be released, the department must withhold the submitted information under section 552.134 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/>

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<sup>1</sup> We note basic information for section 552.134 purposes does not include the identities of witnesses.

[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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sidney M. Pounds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S" and "P".

Sidney M. Pounds  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

SMP/nmd

Ref: ID# 654599

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)