



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 26, 2017

Ms. Annette Vargas  
Records Clerk  
Milam County  
512 North Jefferson, Suite A  
Cameron, Texas 76520

OR2017-11594

Dear Ms. Vargas:

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# 659705.

The Milam County Sheriff's Department (the "department") received a request for two specified incident reports regarding a named individual. We understand you do not have some of the requested information.<sup>1</sup> You take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure. We have 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."<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup>The Act does not require a governmental body to release information that did not exist when a request for information was received or to prepare new information in response to a request. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266, 267-68 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ *dism'd*); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

<sup>2</sup>The 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).

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. This office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987). The court of appeals has concluded public citizens' dates of birth are protected by common-law privacy pursuant to section 552.101. *See 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.). Further, this office has held common-law privacy protects the identifying information of juvenile victims of abuse or neglect. *See* Open Records Decision No. 394 (1983); *cf.* Fam. Code § 261.201. Upon review, we find portions of the submitted information satisfy the standard articulated in *Industrial Foundation*. Thus, the department must withhold all public citizens' dates of birth and the information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, the department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold all public citizens' dates of birth and the information we marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining information.<sup>3</sup>

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](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

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<sup>3</sup>The information being released contains social security numbers. 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* Gov't Code § 552.147(b).

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 'Jahna Ward', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jahna Ward  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JW/eb

Ref: ID# 659705

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)