



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 12, 2017

Ms. Dawn Roberts
Assistant City Attorney
Legal Division
Arlington Police Department
P.O. Box 1065
Arlington, Texas 76004-1065

OR2017-15474

Dear Ms. Roberts:

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# 665820 (ORR# 37351).

The Arlington Police Department (the "department") received a request for all reports pertaining to a specified location. The department claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception the department claims and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts "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 demonstrated. *See id.* at 681-82. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *Id.* at 683. Upon review, we find the submitted information contains information that is considered highly intimate or embarrassing and is not of legitimate concern to the public. Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld.

However, in certain instances, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual's privacy. In this instance, withholding only the individuals' identities or certain details of the report from this requestor would not preserve the individual's common-law right of privacy. Therefore, we conclude the department must withhold the reports we have marked in their entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.¹

Section 552.108(a)(1) 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 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). The department states the remaining report pertains to an active criminal investigation or prosecution. Based on this representation, we conclude the release of the information at issue would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *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 curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the remaining report.

However, we note section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. Gov't Code § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the remaining report under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold the reports we have marked in their entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. With the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold the remaining report under section 552.108(a)(1) 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.

¹As our ruling is dispositive for this information, we need not address the department's remaining argument against its disclosure.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claire Morris Sloan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 665820

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)