



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 25, 2017

Ms. Shea Smith  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Sugar Land  
P.O. Box 110  
Sugar Land, Texas 77487-0110

OR2017-16627

Dear Ms. Smith:

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# 668180 (Request# W002079).

The City of Sugar Land (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified report. You state the city has released some of the requested information. You claim some of the submitted information is 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 Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 of the Government Code encompasses section 801.353 of the Occupations Code, which provides, in part, the following:

(a) A veterinarian may not violate the confidential relationship between the veterinarian and the veterinarian's client.

...

(f) A veterinarian does not violate this section by providing the name or address of a client, or the rabies vaccination status of a specific client's

specific animal, to a public health authority, veterinarian, physician, or other licensed health care professional who requests the identity of the client to obtain information for:

- (1) the verification of a rabies vaccination;
- (2) other treatment involving a life-threatening situation; or
- (3) a public health purpose.

(g) A public health authority that receives information under [s]ubsection (f) shall maintain the confidentiality of the information, may not disclose the information under [the Act] and may not use the information for a purpose that does not directly relate to the protection of public health and safety.

Occ. Code § 801.353(a), (f)-(g). Subsection 801.353(g) prohibits the public disclosure of information obtained by a public health authority from a veterinarian pursuant to subsection 801.353(f) for the reasons enumerated in subsection 801.353(f). Subsection 801.353(f) specifically provides the name and address of the client and the rabies vaccination status of the client's animal may be released to the public health authority for the enumerated purposes.

You claim portions of the submitted information are confidential under section 801.353(g) of the Occupations Code. You indicate the information at issue consists of a veterinary record which was provided by the veterinarian of the animal at issue to a public health authority of the city pursuant to section 801.353(f). *See id.* § 801.353(f). Upon review, we find the information at issue includes the name and address of a client and the rabies vaccination status of the client's animal that was provided to the city by the veterinarian pursuant to subsection 801.353(f). This information, which you have marked, is confidential pursuant to subsection 801.353(g) of the Occupations Code and must be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> The remaining information must be released.

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>As our ruling on this information is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against its disclosure.

[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,



Jennifer Copeland  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JC/sb

Ref: ID# 668180

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)