



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 28, 2017

Ms. Kristie L. Lewis
Staff Attorney
Houston Police Department
1200 Travis, 21st Floor
Houston, Texas 77002-6000

OR2017-22271

Dear Ms. Lewis:

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# 682755 (ORU# 17-07652).

The Houston Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident report. The department claims the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exception 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. This section 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 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. The Third 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.). Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy

of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated the requestor knows the identity of the individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the entire report must be withheld to protect the individual's privacy.

The department argues the submitted information must be withheld in its entirety on the basis of common-law privacy. However, the department has not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which the entirety of the submitted information must be withheld on the basis of common-law privacy. Thus, the department may not withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. Nevertheless, we find the submitted date of birth and some of the remaining information, which we have marked, satisfy the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the department must withhold the submitted date of birth and the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we conclude the remaining information is not confidential under common-law privacy, and the department may not withhold it under section 552.101 on that ground.

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.¹ See Gov't Code § 552.130. The department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold the submitted date of birth and the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must also withhold the information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining information.

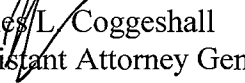
This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

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

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body. See Open Records Decision Nos. 481 at 2 (1987), 480 at 5 (1987).

providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/bw

Ref: ID# 682755 (ORU# 17-07652)

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)