



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 18, 2018

Mr. James Kopp
Assistant City Attorney
Office of the City Attorney
City of San Antonio
P.O. Box 839966
San Antonio, Texas 78283-3966

OR2018-01119

Dear Mr. Kopp:

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# 692092 (COSA No. W190076).

The City of San Antonio (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident involving the requestor's spouse. You claim 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 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 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.). Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987)*. Generally, only highly intimate information that implicates the privacy of an individual is withheld. However, in certain instances, where it is demonstrated that the requestor knows the identity of the

individual involved, as well as the nature of certain incidents, the submitted information must be withheld in its entirety to protect the individual's privacy.

In this instance, although you claim the submitted information is protected in its entirety by common-law privacy, you have not demonstrated, nor does it otherwise appear, this is a situation in which this information must be withheld in its entirety on that basis. Upon review, however, we find some of the information at issue satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. We note, however, the information we have marked pertains to the requestor's spouse; thus, the requestor may have a right of access to his spouse's private information under section 552.023. See Gov't Code § 552.023 (person or person's authorized representative has special right of access to records that contain information relating to the person that are protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect that person's privacy interests); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individual requests information concerning himself). If the requestor is acting as his spouse's authorized representative, then the city may not withhold his spouse's private information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy. If the requestor is not acting as his spouse's authorized representative, then the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find the city has failed to demonstrate the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and of no legitimate public interest. Thus, the city may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code on this basis. 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/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,



Britni Ramirez
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

BR/sb

Ref: ID# 692092

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)