



KEN PAXTON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 8, 2019

Mr. Matthew Murray  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Fort Worth  
200 Texas Street, Third Floor  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-6311

OR2019-00479

Dear Mr. Murray:

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# 745129 (Request No. W077482).

The Fort Worth Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You state the department released the majority of the requested information. 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. This section encompasses information made confidential by other statutes. We note the submitted information consists of department police officers' body worn camera recordings. Body worn cameras are subject to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Chapter 1701 provides the procedures a requestor must follow when seeking a body worn camera recording. Section 1701.661(a) provides:

A member of the public is required to provide the following information when submitting a written request to a law enforcement agency for information recorded by a body worn camera:

- (1) the date and approximate time of the recording;
- (2) the specific location where the recording occurred; and
- (3) the name of one or more persons known to be a subject of the recording.

Occ. Code § 1701.661(a). Upon review of the submitted information, we determine the requestor provided the information required by section 1701.661(a) of the Occupations Code for release of the body worn camera recordings at issue. The submitted recordings reflect they were required to be made by law or the policies of the department and relate to a law enforcement purpose. *See id.* § 1701.661(h). We understand the recordings are or could be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution. *See id.* § 1701.661(d) (stating information “that is or could be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution is subject to the requirements of [the Act.]”). Additionally, we have no indication the recordings document an incident that involves the use of deadly force by an officer or relate to an administrative or criminal investigation of an officer. *See id.* § 1701.660(a). The submitted recordings reflect they were not made in a private space for the purposes of section 1701.661(f). *See id.* §§ 1701.661(f), .651(3) (defining “private space” for purposes of section 1701.661(f)). We note, however, section 1701.661(f) provides, in relevant part:

A law enforcement agency may not release any portion . . . of a recording involving the investigation of conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only and does not result in arrest, without written authorization from the person who is the subject of that portion of the recording or, if the person is deceased, from the person’s authorized representative.

*Id.* § 1701.661(f). You state the submitted video recordings consist of body worn camera recordings involving an investigation of conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only and which did not result in an arrest. You state you do not have permission for release from the subject of the recordings at issue. *See id.* Accordingly, we find the department must withhold the submitted body worn camera recordings under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1701.661(f) of the Occupations Code.

Finally, you request that this office issue a “previous determination” that would permit the department to withhold body worn camera recordings subject to section 1701.661(f) of the Occupations Code without requesting a ruling from this office. We decline to issue such a previous determination at this time. Accordingly, 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 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 'Meagan J. Conway', written over a horizontal line.

Meagan J. Conway  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

MC/gw

Ref: ID# 745129

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)