



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 23, 2019

Ms. DeAndrea Bradford
Assistant City Attorney
Arlington Police Department
Mail Stop 04-0200
P.O. Box 1065
Arlington, Texas 76004-1065

OR2019-01951

Dear Ms. Bradford:

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# 747289 (Police Dept. Ref. No. 68435).

The Arlington Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a traffic accident involving the requestor's client. You state the department will release some information to the requestor. 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 recordings from body worn cameras belonging to department police officers. 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 provides, in relevant part, the following:

(a) 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). We note the requestor provides the requisite information for the submitted body worn camera recordings. The body worn camera 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). Further, 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). We note the body worn camera recordings were not made in a private space for the purposes of section 1701.661(f). *See id.* § 1701.661(f); *see also id.* § 1701.651(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 inform us the submitted body worn camera recordings involve the investigation of conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only and which did not result in an arrest. You also inform us the department does not have permission for release from all of the subjects of the recordings. *See id.* Accordingly, we find the department must withhold the submitted body worn camera recordings in their entireties under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1701.661(f) of the Occupations 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.

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 that reads "Cole Hutchison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "C".

Cole Hutchison
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CH/mo

Ref: ID# 747289

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)