



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 20, 2019

Mr. Stephen White
Staff Attorney
Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 3-810
Austin, Texas 78701-3942

OR2019-13394

Dear Mr. White:

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# 766267.

The Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (the "board") received a request for information pertaining to case number CP18-059 and any Board Orders or disciplinary actions against a named veterinarian. You state the board does not have information responsive to a portion of the request.¹ The board claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception the board claims 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 exception encompasses information made confidential by the current section 801.207 of the Occupations Code, which provides,

(b) Each complaint, investigation file and record, and other investigation report and all other investigative information in the possession of or received or gathered by the board or the board's employees or agents relating to a license holder, an application for license, or a criminal investigation or

¹We note the Act does not require a governmental body to disclose information that did not exist at the time the request was received. *Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Attorney General Opinion H-90 (1973); Open Records Decision Nos. 452 at 2-3 (1986), 342 at 3 (1982), 87 (1975); see also Open Records Decision Nos. 572 at 1 (1990), 555 at 1-2 (1990), 416 at 5 (1984).

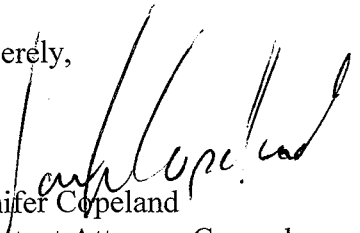
proceeding is privileged and confidential and is not subject to discovery, subpoena, or other means of legal compulsion for release to anyone other than the board or the board's employees or agents involved in discipline of a license holder.

Occ. Code § 801.207(b). The submitted information pertains to a complaint filed with the board after September 1, 2017. The board states under its procedures, an investigation file is opened upon receipt of a complaint, and any matters related to that complaint and subsequent investigation become part of the investigation record. The board informs us the submitted information relates to a complaint filed with the board and this information is contained within investigation files. Based on these representations and our review, we conclude the submitted information is confidential under current section 801.207(b) of the Occupations Code, and the board must withhold it under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis.

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,



Jennifer Copeland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JC/gw

Ref: ID# 766267

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)