



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 20, 2019

Mr. Thomas M. Gilliland
Media Relations
Harris County
1200 Baker Street, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

OR2019-16753

Dear Mr. Gilliland:

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# 771512 (ORR# 19SO8001931).

The Harris County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. The sheriff's office claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exception the sheriff's office 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. Section 552.101 encompasses section 58.008 of the Family Code, which provides, in part:

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records concerning a child and information concerning a child that are stored by electronic means or otherwise and from which a record could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

¹Although the sheriff's office also raises section 552.108 of the Government Code, the sheriff's office has not provided any arguments to support this exception. Therefore, we assume the sheriff's office has withdrawn its claim this section applies to the submitted information. See Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302.

- (1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult records;
- (2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as adult records, accessible only under controls that are separate and distinct from the controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and
- (3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subsection (c) or Subchapter B, D, or E.

Fam. Code § 58.008(b); *see also id.* § 51.03(a) (defining “delinquent conduct” for purposes of title 3 of Family Code). Section 58.008(b) is applicable to records of juvenile conduct that occurred before, on, or after September 1, 2017. The juvenile must have been at least 10 years old and less than 17 years of age when the conduct occurred. *See id.* § 51.02(2) (defining “child” for purposes of title 3 of Family Code). The submitted information involves a juvenile offender, so as to fall within the scope of section 58.008(b). It does not appear any of the exceptions in section 58.008 apply. Accordingly, the sheriff’s office must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008(b) of the Family Code. We note the sheriff’s office must not release basic information when a report is confidential under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008 of the Family 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,



James M. Graham
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JMG/mo

Ref: ID# 771512

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)