



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 23, 2019

Mr. Alexander Garcia
Assistant City Attorney
City of Corpus Christi
P.O. Box 9277
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9277

OR2019-20071

Dear Mr. Garcia:

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# 777391 (ORR# RGar23).

The Corpus Christi Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to three named individuals. The department claims the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exception 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. A compilation of an individual's criminal history is highly embarrassing information, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person. *Cf. U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. for Freedom of the Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 764 (1989) (finding significant privacy interest in compilation of individual's criminal history by recognizing distinction between public records found in courthouse files and local police stations and compiled summary of criminal history information).

Furthermore, we find a compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public. The requestor asks for all information held by the department concerning three named individuals. Therefore, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement information depicting any of the named individuals as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, the department has submitted documents that do not list any of the named individuals as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant. Thus, this information is not confidential under common-law privacy, and the department may not withhold it under section 552.101 on that ground.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 58.008(b) of the Family Code, which provides as follows:

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:

- (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)-(b) (defining "delinquent conduct" and "conduct indicating a need for supervision" 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. *See* Act of May 28, 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., ch. 746, § 22, 2017 Tex. Sess. Law Serv. 3173, 3187. The juvenile must have been at least ten years old and less than seventeen years of age when the conduct occurred. *See* Fam. Code § 51.02(2) (defining "child" for purposes of title 3 of Family Code). We find the information that the department has marked under section 552.108(b) involves a juvenile offender, so as to fall within the scope of that section. The exceptions in section 58.008 do not appear to apply. Therefore, the department must withhold the information it has marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008(b) of the Family Code.

In summary, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement information depicting any of the named individuals as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the information it has marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008(b) 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,



Cindy Nettles
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CN/eb

Ref: ID# 777391

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)