



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 26, 2019

Mr. Vito Chavana
Assistant District Attorney
County of Hidalgo
100 East Cano Street
Edinburg, Texas 78539

OR2019-23798

Dear Mr. Chavana:

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# 790500 (File No. 2019-0112-DA.SO).

The Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for information pertaining to a named employee. You state you will release some information. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.117 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exceptions 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 exception encompasses section 1701.454 of the Occupations Code, which governs the public availability of information submitted to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (the "commission") under subchapter J of chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Section 1701.454 provides as follows:

- (a) All information submitted to the commission under this subchapter is confidential and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government

¹ We note the sheriff's office did not comply with section 552.301 of the Government Code in requesting a ruling from this office. See Gov't Code § 552.301(b), (e). Nonetheless, because the exceptions you claim can provide a compelling reason to overcome the presumption of openness, we will consider their applicability to the submitted information. See *id.* §§ 552.007, .302, .352.

Code, unless the person resigned or was terminated due to substantiated incidents of excessive force or violations of the law other than traffic offenses.

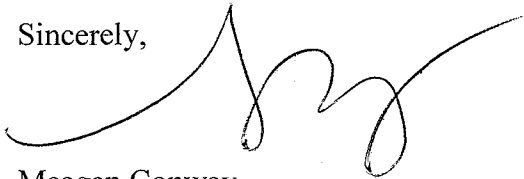
(b) Except as provided by this subchapter, a commission member or other person may not release information submitted under this subchapter.

Occ. Code § 1701.454. The submitted information consists of information that was submitted to the commission pursuant to subchapter J of chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Furthermore, the information at issue does not indicate the named officer resigned or was terminated due to substantiated incidents of excessive force or violations of the law other than traffic offenses. Therefore, the sheriff's office must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1701.454 of the Occupations Code.²

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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Meagan Conway
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MC/mo

Ref: ID# 790500

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

² As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.