



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 15, 2019

Lieutenant Luis Martinez
Laredo Police Department
4712 Maher Avenue
Laredo, Texas 78042-0579

OR2019-32221

Dear Lieutenant Martinez:

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# 796977 (ORR# W013511).

The Laredo Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a named individual. The department states it has released some of the requested information, but claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 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 a named individual. Therefore, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement records depicting the named individual 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 the named individual 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 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate the information at issue relates to a criminal investigation that has concluded in a final result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(2), .301(e)(1)(A). The department states event report number 13-1216-0168 pertains to a case that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. Therefore, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to this information.

Section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. *Id.* § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). *See* Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold event report number 13-1216-0168 under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

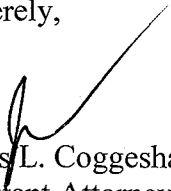
In summary, to the extent the department maintains any unspecified law enforcement records depicting the named individual as a suspect, arrestee, or criminal defendant, the department must withhold such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. With the exception of basic information, which the department must release, the department may withhold event report number 13-1216-0168 under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government 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 <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,



James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/jxd

Ref: ID# 796977

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)