



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 10, 2020

Ms. Julie Pandya Doshier
Counsel for the City of Farmers Branch
Nichols, Jackson, Dillard, Hager & Smith, L.L.P.
500 North Akard, Suite 1800
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2020-03833

Dear Ms. Doshier:

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# 810891 (ORR# 112403).

The City of Farmers Branch (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a named individual and a specified address. The city states it is withholding some of the requested information pursuant to Open Records Letter No. 2017-05218 (2017).¹ The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exceptions 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 section encompasses section 730.004 of the Transportation Code, which provides "an agency may not disclose personal information about any person obtained by the agency in connection with a motor vehicle record." Transp. Code § 730.004. "Personal information" means "information that identifies a person," and includes a person's photograph, social security number, driver identification number, name, and address, but does not include a zip code, telephone number, or medical and disability

¹ Open Records Letter No. 2017-05218 authorizes the city to withhold dates of birth of members of the public under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy without the necessity of requesting an attorney general's decision. See Gov't Code § 552.301(a); Open Records Decision No. 673 at 7-8 (2001).

information. *Id.* § 730.003(6). The Department of Public Safety (“DPS”) is an “agency” for purposes of chapter 730. *See id.* § 730.003(1) (“agency” is state agency that compiles or maintains motor vehicle records). An authorized recipient of personal information may not re-disclose the personal information and to do so is a misdemeanor offense. *Id.* § 730.013(a), (d). We agree the city must withhold the personal information it has marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with sections 730.004 and 730.013 of the Transportation Code.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also 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. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in the *Industrial Foundation* decision. *Id.* at 683. Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987). Upon review, we find some of the submitted information, which we have marked, satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in the *Industrial Foundation* decision. Accordingly, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, the remaining information is not confidential under common-law privacy, and the city may not withhold it under section 552.101 on that ground.

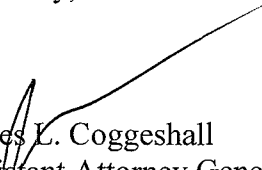
Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator’s license, driver’s license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.130. Upon review, we find you have failed to establish section 552.130 is applicable to the occupation license number you have marked on that ground. Therefore, the city may not withhold that information under section 552.130. However, we agree the city must withhold the remaining information it has marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code, as well as the information we have marked on that ground.

In summary, the city must withhold the following: (1) the information it has marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with sections 730.004 and 730.013 of the Transportation Code; (2) the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy; and (3) with the exception of the marked occupational license number, the information marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The city must release the remaining information.

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# 810891

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)