



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 15, 2020

Ms. Audrea Hutson
Open Records
Williamson County Sheriff's Office
508 South Rock Street
Georgetown, Texas 78626

OR2020-23356

Dear Ms. Hutson:

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# 845780.

The Williamson County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for information pertaining to a specified accident. You state the sheriff's office will withhold dates of birth pursuant to a previous determination issued in Open Records Letter No. 2016-21706 (2016).¹ You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit, or 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. Gov't Code § 552.130(a). Upon review, we agree the submitted video recordings contain motor vehicle record information. In this instance, the sheriff's office states it does not possess the technological capability to redact information from video files. Thus, the sheriff's office must withhold the entire video recordings, as

¹ Open Records Letter No. 2016-21706 is a previous determination issued to the sheriff's office authorizing it to withhold the dates of birth of public citizens under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy without requesting a decision from this office.

well as the information you marked, and the additional information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.² *See* Open Records Decision No. 364 (1983).

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. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in *Industrial Foundation*. *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). This office has also found personal financial information not relating to a financial transaction between an individual and a governmental body is generally highly intimate or embarrassing. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 600 (1992) (personal financial information includes choice of particular insurance carrier), 523 (1989) (common-law privacy protects credit reports, financial statements, and other personal financial information), 373 (1983) (sources of income not related to financial transaction between individual and governmental body protected under common-law privacy). Upon review, we find the information at issue satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, the sheriff’s office must withhold the information you marked and the additional information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

In summary, the sheriff’s office must withhold the entire video recordings, as well as the information you marked, and the additional information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The sheriff’s office must withhold the information you marked and the additional information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The sheriff’s office 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

² As we are able to make this determination, we do not address the applicability of section 1701.661(a) of the Occupations Code to the submitted body worn camera recordings. *See generally* Occ. Code § 1701.661(a), (e).

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,

Kelly McWethy
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KM/gw

Ref: ID# 845780

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)