



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 6, 2020

Ms. Clara Saafir
Assistant District Attorney
Dallas County Criminal District Attorney
411 Elm Street, 5th Floor
Dallas, Texas 75202-3317

OR2020-27952

Dear Ms. Saafir:

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# 853236.

The Dallas County Marshal's Service (the "county") received a request for information pertaining to a named employee. The county states it has released some of the requested information, but claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exceptions and reviewed the submitted information.

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 a conviction or deferred adjudication. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(2), .301(e)(1)(A). However, section 552.108 is generally not applicable to records of an internal affairs investigation that is purely administrative in nature and does not involve the criminal investigation or prosecution of alleged misconduct. *See, e.g., Morales v. Ellen*, 840 S.W.2d 519, 526 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1992, writ denied) (statutory predecessor to section 552.108 not applicable to internal investigation that did not result in criminal investigation or prosecution); *see also City of Fort Worth v. Cornyn*, 86 S.W.3d 320, 329 (Tex. App.—Austin 2002, no pet.) (section 552.108 generally not applicable to law enforcement agency's personnel records); Open Records Decision No. 350 at 3-4 (1982). Upon review, we find the county has failed to establish section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to Exhibit B. Therefore, the county may not withhold Exhibit B on that ground.

Section 552.111 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[a]n interagency or intraagency memorandum or letter that would not be available by law to a party in litigation with the agency[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.111. In Open Records Decision No. 615 (1993), this office reexamined the predecessor to the section 552.111 exception in light of the decision in *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ), and held section 552.111 excepts only those internal communications consisting of advice, recommendations, opinions, and other material reflecting the policymaking processes of the governmental body. See *City of Garland v. Dallas Morning News*, 22 S.W.3d 351, 364 (Tex. 2000); *Arlington Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Tex. Attorney Gen.*, 37 S.W.3d 152 (Tex. App.—Austin 2001, no pet.). An agency’s policymaking functions do not encompass internal administrative or personnel matters; disclosure of information relating to such matters will not inhibit free discussion among agency personnel as to policy issues. ORD 615 at 5-6. Upon review, we conclude the remaining information consists of personnel matters, and not internal communications consisting of advice, recommendations, opinions, and other material reflecting the policymaking processes of the governmental body. Therefore, the county may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.111 and the deliberative process privilege.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision.”¹ Gov’t Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). Under the common-law right of privacy, an individual has a right to be free from the publicizing of private affairs in which the public has no legitimate concern. *Id.* at 682. The Third Court of Appeals has concluded public citizens’ dates of birth are protected by common-law privacy pursuant to section 552.101. See *Paxton v. City of Dallas*, No. 03-13-00546-CV, 2015 WL 3394061, at *3 (Tex. App.—Austin May 22, 2015, pet. denied) (mem. op.). 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 county must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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. The county must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

Section 552.1175 of the Government Code protects the home address, home telephone number, emergency contact information, date of birth, social security number, and family member information of certain individuals, when that information is held by a governmental body in a non-employment capacity and the individual elects to keep the information confidential. See *idi.* § 552.1175. We note section 552.1175 is also applicable to personal cellular telephone numbers, provided the cellular telephone service is not paid

¹ The Office of the Attorney General will raise mandatory exceptions on behalf of a governmental body. See Open Records Decision Nos. 481 at 2 (1987), 480 at 5 (1987).

by a governmental body. *See* Open Records Decision No. 506 at 5-6 (1988) (section 552.117 not applicable to cellular telephone numbers paid for by governmental body and intended for official use). The county must withhold the cellular telephone number in the remaining information under section 552.1175 if the individual at issue is a licensed peace officer, the officer elects to restrict access to this information in accordance with section 552.1175(b) of the Government Code, and the cellular telephone service was not provided to the officer at public expense. However, the county may not withhold this information under section 552.1175 if the individual is not a currently licensed peace officer, the officer does not elect to restrict access to this information in accordance with section 552.1175(b), or the cellular telephone service was provided to the officer at public expense.

In summary, the county must withhold the following; (1) the submitted dates of birth and the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy; (2) the information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code; and (3) the cellular telephone number in the remaining information under section 552.1175 of the Government Code if the individual at issue is a licensed peace officer, the officer elects to restrict access to this information in accordance with section 552.1175(b) of the Government Code, and the cellular telephone service was not provided to the officer at public expense. The county 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# 853236

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)