



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 11, 2020

Mr. Theodore Stoll  
Deputy City Clerk  
City of Wichita Falls  
P.O. Box 1431  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76307

OR2020-31031

Dear Mr. Stoll:

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# 858883 (ORR# 943).

The Wichita Falls Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a named individual. The department claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 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. This section encompasses section 261.201(a) of the Family Code, which provides as follows:

[T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act], and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

- (1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under this chapter and the identity of the person making the report; and
- (2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working

papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Fam. Code § 261.201(a). The department asserts the requested information was used or developed in an investigation under chapter 261. *See id.* §§ 101.003(a) (defining “child” for purposes of section 261.201), 261.001(1) (defining “abuse” for purposes of section 261.201). Upon review, we find the information is within the scope of section 261.201 of the Family Code. Thus, this information is generally confidential under section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. However, section 261.201 (a) provides information encompassed by subsection (a) may be disclosed “for purposes consistent with [the Family Code] and applicable federal or state law.” *Id.* § 261.201(a).

Chapter 411 of the Government Code constitutes “applicable state law” in this instance. The requestor is an enforcement investigator with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (“TDLR”). Sections 411.093 and 411.122 of the Government Code both provide TDLR is entitled to obtain criminal history record information (“CHRI”) maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (“DPS”) that relates to a person who is an applicant for a license issued by TDLR. Gov’t Code §§ 411.093(1), .122(a)(1), .122(d)(10). In addition, section 411.087(a)(2) of the Government Code provides,

(a) Unless otherwise authorized by Subsection (e), a person, agency, department, political subdivision, or other entity that is authorized by this subchapter or Subchapter E-1 to obtain from [DPS CHRI] maintained by [DPS] that relates to another person is authorized to:

...

(2) obtain from any other criminal justice agency in this state [CHRI] maintained by that criminal justice agency that relates to that person.

*Id.* § 411.087(a)(2). CHRI is defined as “information collected about a person by a criminal justice agency that consists of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, and other formal criminal charges and their dispositions.” *See id.* § 411.082(2). Thus, when read together, sections 411.087, 411.093, and 411.122 of the Government Code may grant TDLR a right of access to CHRI in the submitted incident report. The requestor states she is conducting a criminal background check on an individual who has applied for licensure with TDLR. Therefore, if the department determines release of the CHRI is consistent with the Family Code, then the department must release the named individual’s CHRI pursuant to sections 411.087, 411.093, and 411.122 of the Government Code, but withhold the remaining information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. If the department determines release of the CHRI is not consistent with the Family Code, then the department must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201(a) of the Family 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/be

Ref: ID# 858883

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)