



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 21, 2022

Ms. Norma Duncan  
City Secretary  
City of Heath  
200 Laurence Drive  
Heath, Texas 75032

OR2022-01709

Dear Ms. Duncan:

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# 926132.

The City of Heath (the "city") received a request for dash camera and body worn camera recordings related to the requestor's arrest. You claim some of the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.130 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note portions of the submitted information are subject to article 2.1396 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Article 2.1396 provides:

A person stopped or arrested on suspicion of an offense under Section 49.04, 49.045, 49.07, or 49.08, Penal Code, is entitled to receive from a law enforcement agency employing the peace officer who made the stop or arrest a copy of any video made by or at the direction of the officer that contains footage of:

- (1) the stop;
- (2) the arrest;

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<sup>1</sup> Although you do not cite section 552.130 of the Government Code in your brief, we understand you to raise this exception based on the substance of your arguments.

(3) the conduct of the person stopped during any interaction with the officer, including during the administration of a field sobriety test; or

(4) a procedure in which a specimen of the person's breath or blood is taken.

Crim. Proc. Code art. 2.1396. The submitted information consists of video recordings made by or at the direction of officers employed by the city's police department that include footage of the requestor being stopped or arrested on suspicion of an offense under section 49.04 of the Penal Code. *See* Penal Code § 49.04 ("A person commits an offense if the person is intoxicated while operating a motor vehicle in a public place."). Therefore, the requestor is entitled to receive a copy of portions of these video recordings pursuant to article 2.1396 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. You raise section 552.130 of the Government Code for the information at issue. Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or 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. Gov't Code § 552.130(a). We note a statutory right of access generally prevails over the Act's general exceptions to disclosure. *See* Open Record Decision Nos. 613 at 4 (1993) (exceptions in Act cannot impinge on statutory right of access to information), 451 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exception to disclosure under the Act). However, because section 552.130 has its own access provisions, we conclude section 552.130 is not a general exception under the Act. Thus, we must address the conflict between the confidentiality provided under section 552.130 of the Government Code and the right of access provided under article 2.1396 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Where information falls within both a general and a specific provision of law, the specific provision prevails over the general. *See* Gov't Code § 311.026(b); *Horizon/CMS Healthcare Corp. v. Auld*, 34 S.W.3d 887, 901 (Tex. 2000) ("more specific statute controls over the more general"); *Cuellar v. State*, 521 S.W.2d 211 (Tex. Crim. App. 1975) (under well-established rule of statutory construction, specific statutory provisions prevail over general ones). In this instance, section 552.130 generally excepts motor vehicle record information maintained in any context, while article 2.1396 specifically provides access to certain video footage pertaining to certain intoxication offense arrests. Thus, we conclude the access under article 2.1396 is more specific than the general confidentiality provided under section 552.130. Additionally, we note article 2.1396 is the later enacted statute. *See* Gov't Code § 311.025(a) (if statutes enacted at different sessions of legislature are irreconcilable, statute latest in enactment prevails). Accordingly, the city may not withhold any portion of the video recordings at issue under section 552.130. Therefore, the city must release the portions of the video recordings that depict the stop, the arrest, or the conduct of the requestor pursuant to article 2.1396 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. However, we will address your arguments against disclosure of any remaining portions of the video recordings at issue.

As discussed above, 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 id.* § 552.130. Upon review, we find the remaining video recordings contain information subject to section 552.130. You state the city does not have the technological capability to redact the motor vehicle record information from the video recordings. Accordingly, to the extent the remaining portions of the submitted video recordings do not depict the stop, the arrest, or the conduct of the requestor, the city must withhold the remaining portions of the video recordings in their entirety under section 552.130 of the Government Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 364 (1983).

In summary, the city must release the portions of the video recordings that depict the stop, the arrest, or the conduct of the requestor pursuant to article 2.1396 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. To the extent the remaining portions of the submitted video recordings do not depict the stop, the arrest, or the conduct of the requestor, the city must withhold the remaining portions of the video recordings in their entirety under section 552.130 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,

Deborah Southerland  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

DS/jxd

Ref: ID# 926132

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)