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Mr. David V. Overcash
Counsel for the City of Anna
Wolfe, Tidwell & McCoy, LLP
2591 Dallas Parkway, Suite 300
Frisco, Texas 75034

OR2022-02109

Dear Mr. Overcash:

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# 927856 (ORR# W003492).

The City of Anna (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for all reports related to a specified address during a specified time period. The city states it will redact dates of birth of members of the public pursuant to the previous determination issued in Open Records Letter No. 2019-14751 (2019).¹ The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.108, and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions the city claims and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. *See* Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(2) must demonstrate the requested information relates to a criminal investigation that has concluded in a final result other than a conviction or deferred adjudication. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must provide comments explaining why exceptions raised should apply to information requested). The city states case number APD-P2100775 relates to a

¹ Open Records Letter No. 2019-14751 authorized 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* Open Records Decision No. 673 at 7-8 (2001) (listing elements of second type of previous determination under section 552.301(a) of the Government Code).

closed criminal investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Based on this representation and our review, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to case number APD-P2100775.

However, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. *Id.* § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). *See also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). We note basic information includes, among other items, the identity of the complainant. *See* ORD 127 at 3-4. Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the city may withhold case number APD-P2100775 under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code.

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 common-law informer’s privilege, which Texas courts have long recognized. *See Aguilar v. State*, 444 S.W.2d 935, 937 (Tex. Crim. App. 1969). The informer’s privilege protects from disclosure the identities of persons who report activities over which the governmental body has criminal or quasi-criminal law-enforcement authority. *See* Open Records Decision No. 208 at 1-2 (1978). The informer’s privilege protects the identities of individuals who report violations of statutes to the police or similar law-enforcement agencies, as well as those who report violations of statutes with civil or criminal penalties to “administrative officials having a duty of inspection or of law enforcement within their particular spheres.” Open Records Decision No. 279 at 1-2 (1981) (citing 8 John H. Wigmore, *Evidence in Trials at Common Law*, § 2374, at 767 (J. McNaughton Rev. Ed. 1961)). The report must be of a violation of a criminal or civil statute. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 582 at 2 (1990), 515 at 4 (1988). However, witnesses who provide information in the course of an investigation but do not make a report of the violation are not informants for the purposes of claiming the informer’s privilege. The privilege excepts the informer’s statement only to the extent necessary to protect that informer’s identity. Open Records Decision No. 549 at 5 (1990). We note the informer’s privilege does not apply where the informant’s identity is known to the individual who is the subject of the complaint. *See* ORD 208 at 1-2.

The city states the basic information related to case number APD-P2100775 identifies a complainant who reported violations of law to the city’s police department. We have no indication the subject of the complaint is aware of the identity of the complainant in this instance. Based upon the city’s representations and our review, we conclude the city has demonstrated the applicability of the common-law informer’s privilege to the information at issue. Therefore, the city may withhold the identity of the reporting party within the basic information related to case number APD-P2100775, which the city marked, under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with the common-law informer’s privilege.

In summary, with the exception of the basic information, the city may withhold case number APD-P2100775 under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. The city may withhold the information it marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in

conjunction with the common-law informer's privilege. 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,

Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/jm

Ref: ID# 927856

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)