



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 16, 2022

Ms. Marie N. Johnson  
Counsel for the City of Fate  
Messer Fort McDonald  
6371 Preston Road, Suite 200  
Frisco, Texas 75034

OR2022-04759

Dear Ms. Johnson:

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# 931202 (ORR ID: 1257, 1301, and 1302; DPS PIR #21-3901).

The City of Fate (the "city"), which you represent, received three requests from two different requestors for information pertaining to a specified incident.<sup>1</sup> You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.<sup>2</sup>

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 section 58.008 of the Family Code, which provides, in part, the following:

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<sup>1</sup> We note you sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222 (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

<sup>2</sup> We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), law enforcement records concerning a child and information concerning a child that are stored by electronic means or otherwise and from which a record could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

(1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult records;

(2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as adult records, accessible only under controls that are separate and distinct from the controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and

(3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subsection (c) or Subchapter B, D, or E.

...

(d) Law enforcement records concerning a child may be inspected or copied by:

(1) a juvenile justice agency, as defined by Section 58.101;

(2) a criminal justice agency, as defined by Section 411.082, Government Code;

(3) the child; or

(4) the child's parent or guardian.

(e) Before a child or a child's parent or guardian may inspect or copy a record concerning the child under Subsection (d), the custodian of the record shall redact:

(1) any personally identifiable information about a juvenile suspect, offender, victim, or witness who is not the child; and

(2) any information that is excepted from required disclosure under [the Act], or any other law.

Fam. Code § 58.008(b), (d), (e); *see also id.* § 51.03(a)-(b) (defining "delinquent conduct" and "conduct indicating a need for supervision" for purposes of title 3 of Family Code). Section 58.008(b) is applicable to records of juvenile conduct that occurred before, on, or after September 1, 2017. The juvenile must have been at least 10 years old and less than 17 years of age when the conduct occurred. *See id.* § 51.02(2) (defining "child" for purposes of title 3 of Family Code). We find the submitted information involves juvenile offenders, so as to fall within the scope of section 58.008(b). However, the requestors are

either an authorized representative of the family of one of the deceased juvenile offenders or the parent of one of the deceased juvenile offenders and have access to the information pursuant to section 58.008(d). *See id.* § 58.008(d). Therefore, the city may not withhold the submitted information from the requestors under section 552.101 on the basis of section 58.008(b). *See id.* § 58.008(d). Nevertheless, the city must generally withhold the personally identifiable information concerning the other juvenile offenders whose information the requestor does not have a right of access to, under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008(e)(1) of the Family Code. *Id.* § 58.008(e)(1). In addition, section 58.008(e)(2) provides information that is subject to any other exception to disclosure under the Act or other law must be redacted. *See id.* § 58.008(e)(2). Thus, we will consider whether the information at issue is otherwise excepted from disclosure.

We note the submitted information contains a CR-3 accident report that is subject to chapter 550 of the Transportation Code. You seek to withhold the submitted CR-3 accident report, arguing it should not be released because the form is an unapproved draft. Section 550.065 of the Transportation Code applies to accident report forms reported pursuant to chapter 550 or section 601.004 of the Transportation Code. Section 550.062 states:

(a) A law enforcement officer who in the regular course of duty investigates a motor vehicle accident shall make a written report of the accident if the accident resulted in injury to or the death of a person or damage to the property of any one person to the apparent extent of \$1,000 or more.

(b) The report required by Subsection (a) must be filed with the [Texas Department of Transportation] not later than the 10th day after the date of the accident.

Transp. Code § 550.062(a)-(b). You assert the submitted CR-3 report constitutes a draft document. We note section 550.063 of the Transportation Code states, in pertinent part, “a person who is required to file a written accident report shall report on the appropriate form and shall disclose all information required by the form unless the information is not available.” *Id.* § 550.063. Accordingly, the city is only required to disclose the information to the extent that information is available. *See id.* § 550.063, *see also id.* § 552.068. Upon review of chapter 550 of the Transportation Code, we find no statute requiring the form to be complete. Further, you have not cited any statute that requires the form to be complete. Therefore, we find chapter 550 of the Transportation Code is applicable to the submitted CR-3 report.

Section 550.065 applies only to a written report of an accident required under section 550.061, 550.062, or 601.004. Transp. Code § 550.065(a)(1). Chapter 550 requires the creation of a written report when the accident resulted in injury to or the death of a person or damage to the property of any person to the apparent extent of \$1,000 or more. *Id.* §§ 550.061 (operator’s accident report), .062 (officer’s accident report). An accident report is privileged and for the confidential use of the Texas Department of Transportation or a local governmental agency of Texas that has use for the information for accident prevention purposes. *Id.* § 550.065(b). However, a governmental entity shall release an accident report in accordance with subsections (c) and (c-1). *Id.* § 550.065(c), (c-1). Section 550.065(c)

provides a governmental entity shall release an accident report to a person or entity listed under this subsection. *Id.* § 550.065(c). The requestors are persons listed under section 550.065(c). Although the city asserts section 552.108 to withhold the information, a statutory right of access prevails over the Act's general exceptions to public disclosure. *See, e.g.*, Open Records 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). Nevertheless, we must address the conflict between the confidentiality provided under section 58.008(e) of the Family Code and access provided under section 550.065(c) of the Transportation Code.

Where general and specific statutes are in irreconcilable conflict, the specific provision typically prevails as an exception to the general provision unless the general provision was enacted later and there is clear evidence the legislature intended the general provision to prevail. *See* Gov't Code § 311.026(b); *City of Lake Dallas v. Lake Cities Mun. Util. Auth.*, 555 S.W. 2d 163, 168 (Tex. Civ. App.—Fort Worth 1977, writ ref'd n.r.e.). Although section 58.008 generally pertains to all juvenile law enforcement records, section 550.065(c) specifically provides access only to accident reports of the type at issue. Therefore, we conclude the access provided under section 550.065(c) is more specific than, and prevails over, the confidentiality under section 58.008(e). Thus, the city may not withhold any information in the submitted CR-3 accident report under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.008(e) of the Family Code. Consequently, the city must release the CR-3 accident report pursuant to section 550.065(c) of the Transportation Code.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body that claims an exception to disclosure under section 552.108(a)(1) must explain how and why this exception is applicable to the information at issue. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the remaining information relates to a pending criminal investigation. Based upon your representation and our review, we find release of the remaining information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the remaining information.

However, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. Gov't Code § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of basic information, which must be released, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, the city must release the CR-3 accident report pursuant to section 550.065(c) of the Transportation Code. With the exception of basic information, which must be released, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.<sup>3</sup>

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,

Sarah E. Reese  
Attorney  
Open Records Division

SER/ba

Ref: ID# 931202

Enc. Submitted documents

c: 2 Requestors  
(w/o enclosures)

cc: Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)

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<sup>3</sup> Because the requestors have a special right of access to the information being released pursuant to section 58.008(d) of the Family Code, the city must again seek a decision from this office if it receives another request for the same information from another requestor. *See* Fam. Code § 58.008(d).