



KEN PAXTON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 9, 2022

Mr. Stephen D. Gates  
First Assistant City Attorney  
City of Midland  
P.O. Box 1152  
Midland, Texas 79701

OR2022-07057

Dear Mr. Gates:

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# 936618 (ORR# M035892).

The City of Midland (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. The city 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. Section 552.101 encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that is (1) highly intimate or embarrassing, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). To demonstrate the applicability of common-law privacy, both prongs of this test must be satisfied. *Id.* at 681-82. Types of information considered intimate and embarrassing by the Texas Supreme Court are delineated in the *Industrial Foundation* decision. *Id.* at 683. Additionally, this office has concluded some kinds of medical information are generally highly intimate or embarrassing. See Open Records Decision No. 455 (1987). 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.). The city must withhold the submitted date of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. We also find some of the remaining

information, which we have marked, satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in the *Industrial Foundation* decision. Accordingly, the city must also withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, the remaining information is not confidential under common-law privacy, and the city may not withhold it under section 552.101 on that ground.

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.<sup>1</sup> Gov't Code § 552.1175. Section 552.1175 applies to “a current or former member of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Marine Corps, an auxiliary service of one of those branches of the armed forces, or the Texas military forces, as that term is defined by Section 437.001[.]” *Id.* § 552.1175(a)(15). Some of the remaining information pertains to an individual who may be subject to section 552.1175(a)(15). Thus, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.1175(a)(15) of the Government Code if it relates to an individual subject to that section and who elects to restrict access to that information in accordance with section 552.1175(b) of the Government Code. If the individual either is not subject to section 552.1175(a)(15) or does not elect to restrict access to the information in accordance with section 552.1175(b), then the city may not withhold this information under section 552.1175(a)(15).

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. The city must withhold the submitted driver's license number, class, expiration date, and restrictions under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the city must withhold the following: (1) the submitted date 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 552.1175(a)(15) of the Government Code if it relates to an individual subject to that section and who elects to restrict access to that information in accordance with section 552.1175(b) of the Government Code; and (3) the submitted driver's license number, class, expiration date, and restrictions under section 552.130 of the Government Code. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

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# 936618

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)