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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 13, 2022

Ms. Amanda K. Davis
Counsel for the City of McKinney
Brown & Hofmeister, L.L.P.
740 East Campbell Road, Suite 800
Richardson, Texas 75081

OR2022-16948

Dear Ms. Davis:

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# 953410 (McKinney ID Nos. P22531 and P22532).

The McKinney Police Department (the “department”), which you represent, received two requests for information pertaining to a specified incident involving a named individual and the requestor. 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 information.

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 claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). The department states the information submitted as Exhibit B pertains to active criminal prosecutions by the Collin County District Attorney’s Office. Based on these representations, we conclude the release of the information at issue 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 Exhibit B.

However, we note 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; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold Exhibit B under section 552.108(a)(1) 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 doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is 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 *Industrial Foundation*. *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.). We note the requestor has a right of access to his own and his spouse's date of birth pursuant to section 552.023 of the Government Code. See Gov't Code § 552.023(a) (person or person's authorized representative has special right of access to records that contain information relating to the person that are protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect that person's privacy interests); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individuals request information concerning themselves).

Upon review, we find some of the remaining information at issue satisfies the standard articulated by the Texas Supreme Court in *Industrial Foundation*. Accordingly, with the exception of the information we marked for release and the dates of birth belonging to the requestor and the requestor's spouse, the department must withhold the information you marked and all public citizens' dates of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. However, we find the department has failed to demonstrate any of the remaining information is highly intimate or embarrassing and not of legitimate public concern. Thus, the department may not withhold any of the remaining information under section 552.101 in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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.¹ See Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, the department

¹ The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body. See Open Records Decision Nos. 481 at 2 (1987), 480 at 5 (1987).

must withhold the motor vehicle record information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, with the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold Exhibit B under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. With the exception of the information we marked for release and the dates of birth belonging to the requestor and the requestor's spouse, the department must withhold the information you marked and all public citizens' dates of birth under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy. The department must withhold the motor vehicle record information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining information.²

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,

D. Michelle Case
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

DMH/mo

Ref: ID# 953410

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

² We note the requestor has a special right of access to some of the information being released in this instance. See Gov't Code § 552.023(a); ORD 481 at 4. Because such information is confidential with respect to the general public, if the department receives another request for this information from a different requestor, the department must again seek a ruling from this office.