



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF ILLINOIS

Lisa Madigan
ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 17, 2011

Ms. Beverly Glass
FOIA Officer
Frankfort Police Department
20602 Lincoln Way Lane
Frankfort, IL 60423

RE: FOIA Pre-Authorization Request - 2011 PAC 14108

Dear Ms. Glass:

We have received and reviewed the written notice from the Frankfort Police Department of its intention to deny disclosure of certain information under section 7(1)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) (West 2009 Supp.), as amended by Public Act 96-1378, effective July 29, 2010). The Department is seeking to redact dates of birth from the requested documents.

On May 4, 2011, Ms. Susan DeMar Lafferty, of the Southtown Star Newspaper, submitted a FOIA request for accident and police reports related to a May 1, 2011, accident involving John Leonard. In its written notice, the Department asserts that dates of birth are exempt from disclosure under section 7(1)(c) of FOIA.

Section 7(1)(c) of FOIA exempts from inspection and copying "[p]ersonal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, unless the disclosure is consented to in writing by the individual subjects of the information." The exemption defines "unwarranted invasion of personal privacy" as "the disclosure of information that is highly personal or objectionable to a reasonable person and in which the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information." 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) (West 2009 Supp.), as amended by Public Act 96-1378, effective July 29, 2010.

DETERMINATION

The Department's use of the exemption in section 7(1)(c) for the dates of birth is **approved**. We have determined that the Department has met its initial burden of demonstrating

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that the disclosure of dates of birth would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This type of information is highly personal by its very nature and the subject's right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in disclosing this information. *See, e.g., Oliva v. United States*, 756 F. Supp. 105, 107 (E.D.N.Y. 1991) (holding that, under Exemption 6 of the Federal Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. §552(b)(6)), "dates of birth[] are a private matter, particularly when coupled with * * * other information" and "would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy"); *Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts v. Attorney General of Texas*, ___ S.W.3d ___, 54 Tex. Sup. Ct. J. 245 (2010) (state employees have a "nontrivial privacy interest" in their dates of birth under the Texas Public Information Act (*see* Tex. Gov't Code §§552.101, 552.102), which substantially outweighs the negligible public interest in disclosure).

Accordingly, the Department may issue a partial denial letter and release the reports with the dates of birth redacted, if it has not already done so.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (877) 299-3642. This correspondence shall serve to close this matter.

Very truly yours,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Rebecca Riddick.

REBECCA RIDDICK
Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau

cc: Ms. Susan DeMar Lafferty
Staff Writer
Southtown Star Newspaper
6901 W. 159th St.
Tinley Park, IL 60477