



Office of the Attorney General
State of Texas

DAN MORALES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

June 16, 1998

Mr. Kevin D. Pagan
Assistant City Attorney
City of McAllen
P.O. Box 220
McAllen, Texas 78505-0220

OR98-1478

Dear Mr. Pagan:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 116836.

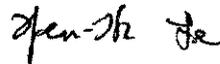
The City of McAllen Fire Department (the "department") received a request for a report of a fire that occurred at 2102 Ebony. You assert that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and have reviewed the documents submitted.

Section 552.108, the "law enforcement exception," excepts from public disclosure information 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. Generally, a governmental body claiming an exception under section 552.108 must reasonably explain, if the information does not supply the explanation on its face, how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See Gov't Code §§ 552.108(a)(1), (b)(1), .301(b)(1); see also Ex parte Pruitt, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977).* You state that the requested information relates to an ongoing criminal investigation. Because you have shown that release of the requested information would interfere with the detection, investigation or prosecution of crime, we conclude that most of the requested information may be withheld under section 552.108(a)(1). *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g 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)* (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases).

However, we note that "basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime" is not excepted from required public disclosure. Gov't Code § 552.108(c). Basic information is the type of information that is considered to be front page offense report information even if this information is not actually located on the front page of the offense report. *See generally Houston Chronicle Publ'g 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); Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976). Thus, except for basic information, the remaining requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108(a)(1). Although section 552.108 authorizes you to withhold the remaining requested information from disclosure, you may choose to release all or part of the information at issue that is not otherwise confidential by law. *See* Gov't Code § 552.007.

We are resolving this matter with an informal letter ruling rather than with a published open records decision. This ruling is limited to the particular records at issue under the facts presented to us in this request and should not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other records. If you have questions about this ruling, please contact our office.

Yours very truly,



Yen-Ha Le
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

YHL/rho

Ref: ID# 116836

Enclosures: Submitted documents

cc: Mr. Mauro Castro
2323 Erie
McAllen, Texas 78501
(w/o enclosures)