



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 12, 2004

Mr. James M. Frazier, III
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 4004
Huntsville, Texas 77342

OR2004-6825

Dear Mr. Frazier:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 210076.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for the third shift roster for June 12, 2004. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. In Open Records Letter No. 2004-6370 (2004), we concluded that the shift rosters for the department's prison units are excepted from public disclosure under section 552.108(b)(1). As the four criteria for a "previous determination" established by this office in Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) have been met, the department may withhold the requested information in accordance with Open Records Letter No. 2004-6370.¹

¹The four criteria for this type of "previous determination" are 1) the records or information at issue fall within a specific, clearly delineated category of information about which this office previously rendered a decision; 2) the governmental body which received the request for the records or information is the same governmental body that previously requested and received a ruling from the attorney general; 3) the attorney general's prior ruling concluded that the specific, clearly delineated category of information is or is not excepted from disclosure under the Act; 4) the law, facts, and circumstances are met to support the prior attorney general ruling's conclusion that the requested information is or is not excepted from required disclosure; and 5) the prior decision explicitly provides that the governmental body to which the decision applies may withhold the information without the necessity of again seeking a decision from this office. See Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001).

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Texas Building and Procurement Commission at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. We note that a third party may challenge this ruling by filing suit seeking to withhold information from a requestor. Gov't Code

§ 552.325. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yen-Ha Le". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "Y" and "L".

Yen-Ha Le
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

YHL/sdk

Ref: ID# 210076

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Jarvis L. Atkins
16607 Park Manor
Houston, Texas 77053
(w/o enclosures)