



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

May 30, 2008

Ms. P. Armstrong  
Assistant City Attorney  
Criminal Law and Police Division  
City of Dallas  
1400 South Lamar  
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2008-07388

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

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# 311570.

The Dallas Police Department (the "department") received a request for a specified police report. You claim that portions of the submitted report are excepted from disclosure under sections 552.108 and 552.130 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> 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). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must reasonably 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). You inform us that the submitted police report pertains to an active criminal investigation. You

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<sup>1</sup>We note that although you do not raise section 552.130 in your brief to this office, you have marked portions of the submitted report as excepted under this exception. Thus, we understand you to raise section 552.130.

argue that release of portions of the submitted report, which you have marked, would hinder this criminal investigation. Based upon your representations and our review, we find that section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to information you have marked. *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref'd n.r.e.*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976) (per curiam) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases). Accordingly, the department may withhold the information you have marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure information that relates to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state or a motor vehicle title or registration issued by an agency of this state. *See Gov't Code* § 552.130(a)(1)-(2). The department must withhold the Texas-issued license plate information you have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department may withhold the information you marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code, and the department must withhold the information you marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released to the requestor.<sup>2</sup>

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 file suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such a challenge, 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

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<sup>2</sup>We note that some of the information being released would not normally be available to the general public. However, because this information pertains to the requestor, it may not be withheld in this instance. *See Gov't Code* § 552.023(a); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individual asks governmental body to provide her with information concerning herself). However, if the department receives another request for this particular information from a requestor who does not have a special right of access, then the department should again seek a decision from this office.

statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, 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 challenge 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 Office of the Attorney General 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. 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,



Reg Hargrove  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

RJH/eeg

Ref: ID# 311570

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Terry Cook  
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(w/o enclosures)