



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 25, 2010

Mr. David K. Walker
County Attorney
Montgomery County
Open Records Division
207 West Phillips, Suite 100
Conroe, Texas 77301

OR2010-12952

Dear Mr. Walker:

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#391672 (Montgomery PIR#2010-2246).

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff") received a request for incident report #10A008921. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(1) 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 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 provide an affidavit from an assistant district attorney for Montgomery County stating the submitted information relates to pending criminal prosecution. Based on this representation and our review, we conclude

¹Although you also raise section 552.101 of the Government Code, you have submitted no arguments in support of the applicability of this exception. *See* Gov't Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A). Therefore, you have provided this office with no basis for finding information confidential under this exception.

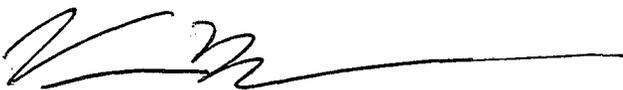
the release of the submitted information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. See *Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex 1976) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the submitted information.

As you acknowledge, 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). Such basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle* and includes a detailed description of the offense. The sheriff must release basic information even if it does not literally appear on the front page of an offense or arrest report. See Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Therefore, with the exception of basic information, the sheriff may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

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 http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Vanessa Burgess
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

VB/jb

Ref: ID#391672

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)