



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

May 10, 2011

Mr. David M. Douglas
Assistant City Attorney
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767-1088

OR2011-06459

Dear Mr. Douglas:

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# 421606.

The Austin Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified accident. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the submitted information contains a CR-3 accident report form completed pursuant to chapter 550 of the Transportation Code. *See* Transp. Code § 550.064 (officer's accident report). Section 550.065(b) provides, except as provided by subsection (c) or (e), accident reports are privileged and confidential. Section 550.065(c)(4) provides for the release of accident reports to a person who provides two of the following three pieces of information: (1) the date of the accident; (2) the name of any person involved in the accident; and (3) the specific location of the accident. *Id.* § 550.065(c)(4). In this instance, the requestor has provided the department with the three requisite pieces of information specified by the statute. Although you seek to withhold this information under section 552.108 of the Government Code, the exceptions found in the Act generally do not apply to information that is made public by other statutes. *See, e.g.*, Open Records Decision Nos. 544 (1990), 378 (1983), 161 (1977), 146 (1976). Accordingly, the department must release the submitted CR-3 accident report in its entirety pursuant to section 550.065(c)(4) of the Transportation Code.

You claim the remaining information is excepted under sections 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. Section 552.108(a)(2) excepts from disclosure information concerning

an investigation that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(2). A governmental body that claims an exception to disclosure under section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why this exception is applicable to the information the governmental body seeks to withhold. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A). You state the remaining information pertains to a closed criminal investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Accordingly, we agree section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable to the information at issue.

However, 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). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing 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). *See* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, except for basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(2).

In summary, the department must release the CR-3 crash report in its entirety pursuant to section 550.065 of the Transportation Code. Except for basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(2) 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,



Ana Carolina Vieira
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ACV/eeg

Ref: ID# 421606

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)