



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 12, 2011

Mr. John Ohnemiller
First Assistant City Attorney
City of Midland
P.O. Box 1152
Midland, Texas 79702-1152

OR2011-13082

Dear Mr. Ohnemiller:

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# 434184.

The Midland Police Department (the "department") received a request for report number 110710003. 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.

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). 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). We note the submitted information includes a summons. Because a copy of the summons has been provided to the individual who was charged, we find that release of the summons will not interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Gov't Code* § 552.108(a)(1). Therefore, the department may not withhold the summons under section 552.108(a)(1). You state the remaining information relates to a pending criminal investigation and prosecution. Based on this representation, we conclude the release of this 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. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e.*, 536

S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is generally applicable to the remaining information.

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). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. See 531 S.W.2d at 186-88. The department must release basic information, even if the information does not literally appear on the front page of an offense or arrest report. See Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of the summons and basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1).¹

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/agn

¹We note the information being released contains the requestor's driver's license number, to which the requestor has a right of access under section 552.023 of the Government Code. See Gov't Code §552.023(a) (person has special right of access, beyond right of general public, to information held by governmental body that relates to person and is protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect person's privacy interests); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individual asks governmental body to provide him with information concerning himself). This office issued Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009), a previous determination to all governmental bodies authorizing them to withhold ten categories of information, including a Texas driver's license number under section 552.130 of the Government Code, without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision. Accordingly, if the department receives another request from an individual other than this requestor, the department is authorized to withhold this requestor's driver's license number under section 552.130 without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision.

Ref: ID# 434184

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)
