



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 27, 2011

Ms. Tiffany N. Evans
Assistant City Attorney
City of Houston
P.O. Box 368
Houston, Texas 77001-0368

OR2011-18977

Dear Ms. Evans:

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# 445363 (GC 19149).

The Houston Police Department (the “department”) received a request for eight categories of information pertaining to a specified collision. You claim the submitted information is exempted 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 exempts 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). You state the submitted information relates to an open criminal case. Based on this representation, we find that release of the 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) (court delineates law enforcement

interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curium*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976).

We note, however, the information at issue includes a DIC-24 statutory warning and a DIC-25 notice of suspension. The arrestee was provided copies of these forms. You have not explained how releasing this information, which has already been seen by the arrestee, would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See* Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). Accordingly, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms may not be withheld under section 552.108.

Additionally, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure "basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime." *Id.* § 552.108(c). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic "front-page" information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-187; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Accordingly, with the exception of the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms and basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

Finally, we note the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms contain a driver's license number. Section 552.130 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state or another state or county.¹ *See* Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1). The department must withhold the driver's license number in the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms under section 552.130.

In summary, except for the driver's license number, which the department must withhold under section 552.130 of the Government Code, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms must be released. The department may withhold the remaining submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code, except for the basic information that must be released under section 552.108(c).

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

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception such as section 552.130 on behalf of a governmental body. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, fluid strokes that form the name Ana Carolina Vieira.

Ana Carolina Vieira
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ACV/agn

Ref: ID# 445363

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)