



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

September 20, 2013

Ms. Natasha Brooks  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Midland  
P.O. Box 1152  
Midland, Texas 79702

OR2013-16391

Dear Ms. Brooks:

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# 504787 (City ID# 12906).

The City of Midland (the "city") received a request for a specified incident report. You claim the requested 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. Section 550.065(b) of the Transportation Code states that except as provided by subsection (c) or (e), accident reports are privileged and for the confidential use of certain specified entities. Transp. Code § 550.065(b). The submitted CR-3 crash report was completed pursuant to chapter 550 of the Transportation Code. *See id.* § 550.064 (officer's accident report). 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). Under this provision, a governmental entity is required to release a copy of an accident report to a person who provides two or more pieces of information specified by the statute. *Id.* In this instance, the requestor has provided the city with the requisite information for the CR-3 crash report. Although you seek to withhold this information under section 552.108 of the Government Code, we note information that is specifically made public by statute may not be withheld from the public under the general exceptions to public disclosure under the Act. *See, e.g.,* Open Records Decision Nos. 544 (1990), 378 (1983), 161 (1977), 146 (1976). Accordingly, the city must release this report in its entirety to the requestor.

Next, we note the submitted information includes a court document, which is subject to section 552.022 of the Government Code. Section 552.022(a)(17) provides for the required public disclosure of “information that is also contained in a public court record” unless it is “made confidential under [the Act] or other law[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.022(a)(17). Although you raise section 552.108 of the Government Code, this is a discretionary exception and does not make information confidential under the Act. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 665 at 2 n.5 (2000) (discretionary exceptions generally), 663 at 5 (1999) (waiver of discretionary exceptions), 177 at 3 (1977) (statutory predecessor to section 552.108 subject to waiver). As such, section 552.108 does not make information confidential for the purposes of section 552.022. Therefore, the marked court document may not be withheld under section 552.108. As you raise no further exceptions to disclosure, the court document must be released.

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). You state that release of the remaining submitted information will interfere with a pending criminal investigation and prosecution. Based on this representation, we conclude that section 552.108(a)(1) is generally applicable in this instance. *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, that the information at issue includes a DIC-24 statutory warning and a DIC-25 notice of suspension. The city provided copies of these forms to the arrestee. 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 city may withhold the remaining submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Although basic information includes an arrestee’s social security number, section 552.147(b) of the Government Code authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person’s social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office under the Act. Gov’t Code § 552.147(b).

We note that the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms contain a driver's license number. Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides that 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 country is excepted from public release.<sup>2</sup> Gov't Code § 552.130(a). The city must withhold the driver's license number we have marked under section 552.130.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the city must release the CR-3 crash report pursuant to section 550.065(c)(4) of the Transportation Code. The marked court document must be released pursuant to section 552.022(a)(17) of the Government Code. Except for the marked driver's license number, which the city must withhold under section 552.130 of the Government Code, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms must be released. Except for basic information, the city may withhold the remaining 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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml), 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Tamara H. Holland  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

THH/ac

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<sup>2</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception like section 552.130 on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

<sup>3</sup>We note section 552.130(c) of the Government Code allows a governmental body to redact the information described in subsection 552.130(a) without the necessity of seeking a decision from the attorney general. *See* Act of May 6, 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., S.B. 458, § 1 (to be codified as an amendment to Gov't Code § 552.130(c)). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.130(e). *See* Gov't Code § 552.130(d), (e).

Ref: ID# 504787

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)