



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 23, 2014

Mr. John C. West
General Counsel
TDCJ - Office of the Inspector General
4616 West Howard Lane, Suite 250
Austin, Texas 78728

OR2014-16813

Dear Mr. West:

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# 537118 (OIG Open Records 2014-00150).

The Office of the Inspector General of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for documents and videos pertaining to the death of a named inmate. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.102, 552.108, 552.117, 552.1175, 552.130, 552.134, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a) 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: (1) 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(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why release of the requested information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *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 a pending criminal investigation by the department investigator that may lead to indictments and the criminal prosecution of suspected individuals. Further, you state release of anything other than basic information at this time could compromise the integrity of the investigative process. Based upon your

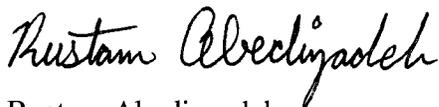
representation and our review, we find the department has demonstrated the release of the information at issue would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. See *Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court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

We note, 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; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing the types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.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.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,



Rustam Abedinzadeh
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RA/dls

¹As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure for this information, except to note the basic information at issue is not excepted from disclosure under section 552.134 of the Government Code. See Gov’t Code § 552.029(8) (basic information regarding death of inmate not excepted under section 552.134).

Ref: ID# 537118

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)