



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 12, 2016

Ms. Ann-Marie Sheely
Assistant County Attorney
Travis County Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767

OR2016-22916

Dear Ms. Sheely:

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# 630033.

The Travis County Attorney's Office (the "county attorney's office") received a request for its entire file pertaining to the arrest of the requestor's client. 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 representative sample of information.¹

Initially, we note the submitted information contains blood test results of the blood alcohol content of the requestor's client. Section 724.018 of the Transportation Code provides, "[o]n the request of a person who has given a specimen at the request of a peace officer, full information concerning the analysis of the specimen shall be made available to the person or the person's attorney." Transp. Code § 724.018. In this instance, the requestor represents the individual who submitted the specimen at the request of a peace officer. You seek to withhold the information at issue under section 552.108 of the Government Code. A provision providing a specific right of access prevails over the general exceptions to

¹We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

disclosure found in the Act. *See* Open Records Decision No. 451 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exceptions to disclosure under statutory predecessor to Act). Thus, the county attorney's office may not withhold the information at issue under section 552.108 of the Government Code. Therefore, the county attorney's office must release the submitted blood test results, which we have marked, to this requestor pursuant to section 724.018.

Section 552.108 of the Government Code provides, in pertinent part:

(a) Information held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime is excepted from [required public disclosure] if:

(4) it is information that:

(A) is prepared by an attorney representing the state in anticipation of or in the course of preparing for criminal litigation; or

(B) reflects the mental impressions or legal reasoning of an attorney representing the state.

Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(4). A governmental body must explain how and why section 552.108 is applicable to the information at issue. *See id.* §§ 552.108, .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). In *Curry v. Walker*, 873 S.W.2d 379 (Tex. 1994), the Texas Supreme Court held a request for a district attorney's "entire litigation file" was "too broad" and, quoting *National Union Fire Insurance Co. v. Valdez*, 863 S.W.2d 458 (Tex. 1993) (orig. proceeding), held "the decision as to what to include in [the file] necessarily reveals the attorney's thought processes concerning the prosecution or defense of the case." *Curry*, 873 S.W.2d at 380. You contend the instant request encompasses the county attorney's office's entire prosecution file for the case at issue. In addition, you state release of the information at issue would reveal the mental impressions or legal reasoning of prosecutors in the county attorney's office. Based on your representations and our review, we agree section 552.108(a)(4) is applicable to the remaining information.

However, section 552.108 of the Government Code 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 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 made public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of basic information, which must be released, the county attorney's office may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(4).

In summary, the county attorney's office must release the submitted blood test results to this requestor pursuant to section 724.018 of the Transportation Code. With the exception of basic information, which must be released, the county attorney's office may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(4) of the Government Code.²

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,



Cole Hutchison
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CH/bhf

Ref: ID# 630033

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

²We note the requestor has a right of access beyond that of the general public to some of the information being released. See Gov't Code § 552.023(a) (person or person's authorized representative 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).