



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

June 6, 2007

Mr. J. David Dodd, III  
Nichols, Jackson, Dillard, Hager & Smith, L.L.P.  
1800 Lincoln Plaza  
500 North Akard  
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2007-07097

Dear Mr. Dodd:

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# 284608.

The Allen Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for all information relating to two specified incidents. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.103 and 552.108 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 required public disclosure "[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime" if the information meets certain requirements, such that:

(1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation or prosecution of crime[.]

Gov't Code § 522.108(a). Generally, 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.* § 522.108(a)(1); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977).

You have stated that release of the requested information would interfere with the further investigation and prosecution of crime. Based on this claim and our review of the information at issue, we conclude that the release of the information at this time would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publishing Company 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) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable.

However, section 552.108 does not except from required public disclosure “basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime.” Gov’t Code § 552.108(c). *See also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing basic information). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. 531 S.W.2d 186-87. Thus, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the requested information under section 552.108(a)(1).<sup>1</sup>

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov’t Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

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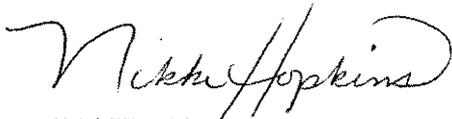
<sup>1</sup> As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure except to note that basic information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle* is generally not excepted from public disclosure under section 552.103 of the Government Code. Open Records Decision No. 597 (1991).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,



Nikki Hopkins  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

NH/sdk

Ref: ID# 284608

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Allison Hamilton Schneider  
352 Leeward Circle  
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(w/o enclosures)