



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

June 15, 2007

Ms. K. Jefferson Bray
Senior Legal Advisor
City of Plano
P.O. Box 860358
Plano, Texas 75086-0358

OR2007-07627

Dear Ms. Bray:

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# 282344.

The Plano Police Department (the "department") received a request for all "activity/incident/arrest reports for the 30 days before and after August 23, 2006 . . . of Officer(s) Grant Harp #1389, Brant Hickman #1255 and Patrick Mulkern #1347 and any mobile data transmissions . . . 15 minutes before the stop and 15 minutes after the arrest from the Plano Police Department." You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.103 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.103 provides in relevant part as follows:

(a) Information is excepted from [required public disclosure] if it is information relating to litigation of a civil or criminal nature to which the state or a political subdivision is or may be a party or to which an officer or employee of the person's office or employment, is or may be a party.

...

(c) Information relating to litigation involving a governmental body or an officer or employee of a governmental body is excepted from disclosure

¹Although you initially raised section 552.108 of the Government Code, you do not explain how this exception applies to the submitted information. Therefore, the department may not withhold the information under section 552.108. See Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302.

under Subsection (a) only if the litigation is pending or reasonably anticipated on the date that the requestor applies to the officer for public information for access to or duplication of the information.

Gov't Code § 552.103(a), (c). The department has the burden of providing relevant facts and documents to show that the section 552.103(a) exception is applicable in a particular situation. The test for meeting this burden is a showing that (1) litigation is pending or reasonably anticipated, and (2) the information at issue is related to that litigation. *Univ. of Tex. Law Sch. v. Tex. Legal Found.*, 958 S.W.2d 479, 481 (Tex. App.—Austin 1997, no pet.); *Heard v. Houston Post Co.*, 684 S.W.2d 210, 212 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 1984, writ ref'd n.r.e.); Open Records Decision No. 551 at 4 (1990). The department must meet both prongs of this test for information to be excepted under section 552.103(a).

You state, and provide documentation showing, that there is currently a pending prosecution. We note, however, that the department is not a party to this litigation. See Gov't Code § 552.103(a); Open Records Decision No. 575 at 2 (1990) (stating that predecessor to section 552.103 only applies when governmental body is party to litigation). In such a situation, we require an affirmative representation from the governmental body with the litigation interest that the governmental body wants the information at issue withheld from disclosure under section 552.103. You state that the Collin County District Attorney's Office (the "district attorney") is a party to the pending prosecution and that the district attorney has requested that the department not release "information regarding incidents that may result in criminal litigation" However, the letter, which you base this statement upon, is the district attorney's policy on the handling of "Kyles" letters by all Collin County law enforcement agencies. The letter does not provide our office with a representation from the district attorney that he wants the requested information in this specific request withheld. Accordingly, you have not provided us with a representation from the district attorney that he wants the information at issue in the present request withheld. Therefore, the department may not withhold the submitted information under section 552.103.

We note that the submitted information contains Texas issued motor vehicle record information. Section 552.130 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that "relates to . . . a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state [or] a motor vehicle title or registration issued by an agency of this state."² Gov't Code § 552.130. The department must withhold the Texas issued motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130.

²The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

In summary, the department must withhold the Texas issued motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released.

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).

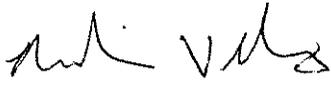
If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melanie J. Villars', written in a cursive style.

Melanie J. Villars
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MJV/jb

Ref: ID# 282344

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Sharon Curtis
1216 North Central Expressway, Suite 101
McKinney, Texas 75070
(w/o enclosures)