



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

July 17, 2009

Mr. Reg Hargrove
Assistant Attorney General
Public Information Coordinator
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, Texas 78711-2548

OR2009-09928

Dear Mr. Hargrove:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 349357 (PIR No. 09-24892).

The Office of the Attorney General (the "OAG") received a request for information pertaining to the investigation of an alleged incident at the Abilene State School involving Brandon Eugene Crow. The OAG asserts the information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.108, 552.130, 552.137, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the OAG's claimed exceptions to disclosure and have reviewed the submitted sample of information.¹

Section 552.108(a) 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). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(a); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). In this instance, the OAG argues release of Exhibit B, which relates to a current investigation by its Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, will

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.

compromise the investigation. Based on the OAG's representation and our review of the records, we agree the OAG may withhold Exhibit B under section 552.108(a)(1). See *Houston Chronicle Publ'g 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) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases).

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 Publ'g Co.* Thus, with the exception of the basic front page offense and arrest information, the OAG may withhold the information from disclosure based on section 552.108(a)(1).² We note the OAG has the discretion to release all or part of the information that is not otherwise confidential by law. *Id.* § 552.007.

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.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, 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 must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

Sincerely,



Yen-Ha Le
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

YHL/sdk

Ref: ID# 349357

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

²Because section 552.108 is dispositive, we do not address the OAG's other arguments.