



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 31, 2009

Ms. Jordan Hale
Assistant Attorney General
Assistant Public Information Coordinator
General Counsel Division
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, Texas 78711-2548

OR2009-12197

Dear Ms. Hale:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 357454 (PIR # 09-25595).

The Office of the Attorney General (the "OAG") received a request for the statements made by the requestor's clients concerning an investigation of the Webb County Tax Assessor/Collector's Office. The OAG states the information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.108 and 552.136 of the Government Code. We have considered the OAG's claimed exceptions to disclosure and have reviewed the submitted information.

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(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(a); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977).

The OAG argues section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable because the information relates to a pending criminal case conducted by its Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions Divisions.

Based upon this representation, we conclude release of the information 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), *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, the OAG may withhold the information under section 552.108(a)(1). Because section 552.108 is dispositive, we do not address the OAG's other argument for this information.

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# 357454

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)