



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

November 24, 2009

Mr. Christopher D. Taylor
Assistant City Attorney
City of Waco - Legal Services
P.O. Box 2570
Waco, Texas 76702-2570

OR2009-16730

Dear Mr. Taylor:

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# 367205 (Waco Reference # LGL-09-1138).

The Waco Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.108, 552.130, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . 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). You state that the information you have marked relates to a pending criminal investigation. Based upon your representation and our review, we conclude that the release of the marked 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., 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976) (per

curiam) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases). Thus, the department may withhold the information you have marked under section 552.108(a)(1).¹

Next, you have marked information that you claim is excepted under section 552.130 of the Government Code. Section 552.130 excepts from public 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. *See* Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1)-(2). We note that section 552.130 protects personal privacy. The requestor is the individual to whom a portion of the marked Texas motor vehicle record information pertains. Thus, the requestor has a right of access to his own Texas motor vehicle record information under section 552.023. *See generally id.* § 552.023(b) (governmental body may not deny access to person to whom information relates, or that person's representative, solely on grounds that information is considered confidential by privacy principles). Accordingly, with the exception of the requestor's Texas motor vehicle information, the department may withhold the Texas motor vehicle record information you have marked, as well as the additional information we have marked, under section 552.130.

Finally, you have highlighted a social security number. Section 552.147 of the Government Code provides "[t]he social security number of a living person is excepted from" required public disclosure under the Act. *Id.* § 552.147. Therefore, the department may withhold the highlighted social security number in the remaining information under section 552.147 of the Government Code.²

In summary, the department may withhold the information you have marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. With the exception of the requestor's Texas motor vehicle information, the department may withhold the Texas motor vehicle record information you have marked, as well as the additional information we have marked, under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The department may withhold the highlighted social security number under section 552.147 of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released to this requestor.³

¹We note that you have the discretion to release all or part of the marked information that is not otherwise confidential by law. Gov't Code § 552.007.

²We note that section 552.147(b) of the Government Code authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person's social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office under the Act.

³We note that the requestor has a special right of access to some of the information being released in this instance. *See generally id.* § 552.023(b). Because such information may be confidential with respect to the general public, if the department receives another request for this information from a different requestor, the department must again seek a ruling from this office.

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, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,


Laura Ream Lemus
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

LRL/jb

Ref: ID# 367205

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)