



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

February 4, 2010

Mr. William T. Edmundson
Lieutenant, Record Division
Pharr Police Department
1900 South Cage
Pharr, Texas 78577-6751

OR2010-01728

Dear Mr. Edmundson:

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# 369446.

The Pharr Police Department (the "department") received a request for all records from case #01-12677. You state that you have released a portion of the requested information. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(1) 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). 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 do not state that the submitted information relates to an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution, nor have you explained how its release would interfere in some way with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. Therefore, you have not met your burden under section 552.108(a)(1). Because you have failed to demonstrate the applicability of section 552.108(a)(1) of the

Government Code, the department may not withhold the information at issue on that basis.

Section 552.136 states that “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential.”¹ Gov’t Code § 552.136; *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). Accordingly, you must withhold the bank account and routing numbers we have marked under section 552.136 of the Government Code.² The remaining information must be released.³

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,



Andrea L. Caldwell
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ALC/eeg

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

²We note this office recently issued Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009), a previous determination to all governmental bodies authorizing them to withhold ten categories of information, including bank account and routing numbers under section 552.136 of the Government Code, without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision.

³We note that the information being released contains confidential information to which the requestor has a right of access. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.023(a); Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987) (privacy theories not implicated when individual or authorized representative asks governmental body to provide information concerning that individual). However, if the department receives another request for this particular information from a different requestor, then the department should again seek a decision from this office.

Ref: ID# 369446

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)