



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

July 1, 2014

Mr. Matthew M. Kendall  
Assistant County and District Attorney  
County of Cameron  
964 East Harrison Street  
Brownsville, Texas 78520

OR2014-11342

Dear Mr. Kendall:

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# 527736.

The Cameron County District Attorney's Office (the "district attorney's office") received a request for certain video evidence related to cause number 2013-DCR-1371. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.103 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim.

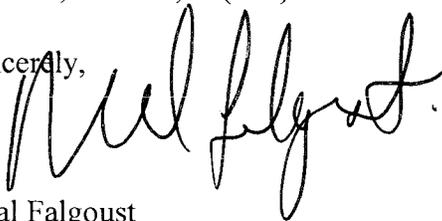
We must address the responsibilities of the district attorney's office under the Act. Section 552.301 of the Government Code prescribes the procedures a governmental body must follow in asking this office to decide whether requested information is excepted from public disclosure. Pursuant to section 552.301(e), a governmental body that receives a request for information it wishes to withhold under an exception to disclosure is required to submit to this office within fifteen business days of receiving the request (1) general written comments stating the reasons why the stated exceptions apply that would allow the information to be withheld, (2) a copy of the written request for information, (3) a signed statement or sufficient evidence showing the date the governmental body received the written request, and (4) a copy of the specific information requested or representative samples, labeled to indicate which exceptions apply to which parts of the documents. Gov't Code § 552.301(e). As of the date of this letter, you have not submitted a copy or representative sample of the specific information requested. Consequently, we find the district attorney's office failed to comply with the requirements of section 552.301(e) of the Government Code in asking this office for a ruling.

Pursuant to section 552.302 of the Government Code, a governmental body's failure to comply with the procedural requirements of section 552.301 results in the legal presumption the information is public and must be released, unless a governmental body demonstrates a compelling reason to withhold the information to overcome this presumption. *See Gov't Code § 552.302; Simmons v. Kuzmich*, 166 S.W.3d 342, 350 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2005, no pet.); *Hancock v. State Bd. of Ins.*, 797 S.W.2d 379, 381 (Tex. App.—Austin 1990, no writ) (governmental body must make compelling demonstration to overcome presumption of openness pursuant to statutory predecessor to section 552.302); Open Records Decision No. 630 (1994). Normally, a compelling reason exists when third-party interests are at stake or when information is confidential under other law. Open Records Decision No. 150 (1977). Sections 552.103 and 552.108 of the Government Code do not make information confidential. *See Gov't Code § 552.007; Dallas Area Rapid Transit v. Dallas Morning News*, 4 S.W.3d 469, 475–76 (Tex. App.—Dallas 1999, no pet.) (governmental body may waive section 552.103; Open Records Decision Nos. 663 at 5 (1999) (untimely request for decision resulted in waiver of discretionary exceptions), 177 (1977) (statutory predecessor to section 552.108 subject to waiver). Accordingly, the district attorney's office may not withhold any of the requested information under section 552.103 or section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have no choice but to order you to release the requested information in accordance with section 552.302 of the Government Code.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml), 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Neal Falgoust  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

NF/som

Ref: ID# 527736

c: Requestor