



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 29, 2014

Mr. Cary L. Bovey
Counsel for the City of Navasota
Law Office of Cary L. Bovey, PLLC
2251 Double Creek Drive, Suite 204
Round Rock, Texas 78664

OR2014-17258

Dear Mr. Bovey:

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# 542771.

The Navasota Police Department (the "department"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.108, 552.130, 552.136, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the submitted information includes court-filed documents. Section 552.022(a)(17) of the Government Code provides for required public disclosure of "information that is also contained in a public court record[,]" unless the information is expressly made confidential under the Act or other law. Gov't Code § 552.022(a)(17). The department seeks to withhold the information at issue under section 552.108 of the Government Code. However, this section is a discretionary exception to disclosure that protects a governmental body's interests and does not make information confidential under the Act. *See id.* § 552.007; Open Records Decision Nos. 665 at 2 n.5 (2000) (discretionary exceptions generally), 177 at 3 (1977) (statutory predecessor to section 552.108 subject to waiver). Therefore, the department may not withhold the court-filed documents, which we have marked, under section 552.108. However, because section 552.136 of the Government Code makes information confidential for purposes of section 552.022, we will address its

applicability to the court-filed documents subject to section 522.022(a)(17). Further, we will address the department's arguments against disclosure of the remaining information.

Section 552.136 of the Government Code provides, "Notwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], 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." Gov't Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining "access device"). This office has determined insurance policy numbers are access device numbers for purposes of section 552.136. Accordingly, the department must withhold the insurance policy number you have marked under section 552.136 of the Government Code.

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). 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 the remaining information pertains to an active criminal investigation or prosecution. Based on your representation, we conclude the release of the information at issue 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) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the remaining information.

However, we note, and you acknowledge, 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*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). We note the basic information includes, among other items, the social security number of the arrestee. *See* ORD 127 at 3-4. However, the basic information does not include motor vehicle record information encompassed by section 552.130 of the Government Code. *See id.* Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

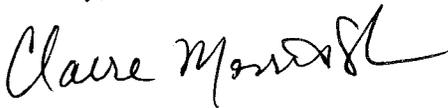
Section 552.147(a) of the Government Code excepts the social security number of a living individual from public disclosure. Gov't Code § 552.147(a). Accordingly, the department may withhold the social security number of the arrestee, which you have marked, under section 552.147 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must release the marked court-filed documents pursuant to section 552.022(a)(17) of the Government Code; however, in releasing these documents, the department must withhold the insurance policy number you marked under section 552.136 of the Government Code. With the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code; however, in releasing the basic information, the department may withhold the marked social security number of the arrestee under section 552.147 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, 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,



Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 542771

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)