



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 16, 2014

Mr. John K. McKinney, Jr.
Assistant County Attorney
County of Montgomery
501 North Thompson, Suite 300
Conroe, Texas 77301

OR2014-22764

Dear Mr. McKinney:

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# 553097 (ORR# 14PIA0631).

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for information regarding a specified offense report. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code.¹ We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a) 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: (1) 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 information at issue 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, 710 (Tex. 1977). The sheriff's office states the submitted information relates to a pending criminal prosecution. We note the submitted information includes a citation, which we have marked.

¹Although you also raise section 552.101 of the Government Code, you have provided no arguments in support of that exception. Accordingly, we assume you no longer assert that exception. *See Gov't Codes* §§ 552.301, .302.

Because the individual who was cited received a copy of the citation, we find release of the citation will not interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. Therefore, the sheriff's office may not withhold the citation under section 552.108(a)(1). Based on the sheriff's office's representation, we conclude the release of the remaining 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, 186-87 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (delineating law enforcement interests present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976).

However, 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 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of the marked citation and basic information, the sheriff's office may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

We note portions of the citation are subject to section 552.130 of the Government Code.² Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. *See* Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, the sheriff's office must withhold the motor vehicle record information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the sheriff's office must release the marked citation; however, in releasing the citation, the sheriff's office must withhold the motor vehicle record information we marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code. With the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the sheriff's office may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.³

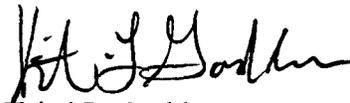
This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

²The 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).

³We note the basic information contains the arrestee's social security number. *See* ORD 127 at 4. 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. Gov't Code § 552.147(b).

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,



Kristi L. Godden
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KLG/cz

Ref: ID# 553097

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)