



January 26, 2015

Mr. Ryan D. Pittman
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Abernathy Roeder Boyd & Joplin, P.C.
P.O. Box 1210
McKinney, Texas 75070-1210

OR2015-01425

Dear Mr. Pittman:

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# 555986.

The City of Wylie (the "city"), 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 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the submitted information contains a CR-3 accident report form completed pursuant to chapter 550 of the Transportation Code. *See* Transp. Code § 550.064 (officer's accident report). Section 550.065(b) states that, except as provided by subsection (c) or subsection (e), accident reports are privileged and confidential. *See id.* § 550.065(b). Section 550.065(c)(4) provides for the release of accident reports to a person who provides two of the following three pieces of information: (1) the date of the accident; (2) the name of any person involved in the accident; and (3) the specific location of the accident. *Id.* § 550.065(c)(4). Under this provision, the Texas Department of Transportation or another governmental entity is required to release a copy of an accident report to a person who provides the agency with two or more of the items of information specified by the statute. *Id.* In this instance, the requestor has provided the city with at least two of the specified items of information. Although you seek to withhold this information under section 552.108 of the Government Code, we note information that is specifically made public by statute may not be withheld from the public under the general exceptions to public disclosure under the Act. *See, e.g.,* Open Records Decision Nos. 613 at 4 (1993) (exceptions in Act cannot impinge on statutory right of access to information), 451 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exception to disclosure under the Act). Thus, the city may not withhold the CR-3 accident report under section 552.108.

You also assert portions of the CR-3 accident report are confidential under section 552.130 of the Government Code. Section 552.130 excepts from disclosure information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title, or registration issued by an agency of this state or another state or county. See Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1)-(2). As noted above, a statutory right of access generally prevails over the Act's general exceptions to disclosure. See ORDs 613 at 4, 451. However, because section 552.130 has its own access provisions, we conclude section 552.130 is not a general exception under the Act. Thus, we must address the conflict between the access provided under section 550.065 of the Transportation Code and the confidentiality provided under section 552.130. Where information falls within both a general and a specific provision of law, the specific provision prevails over the general. See *Horizon/CMS Healthcare Corp. v. Auld*, 34 S.W.3d 887, 901 (Tex. 2000) ("more specific statute controls over the more general"); *Cuellar v. State*, 521 S.W.2d 277 (Tex. Crim. App. 1975) (under well-established rule of statutory construction, specific statutory provisions prevail over general ones); Open Records Decision Nos. 598 (1991), 583 (1990), 451. As mentioned above, section 550.065 specifically provides access only to accident reports of the type at issue, while section 552.130 generally excepts motor vehicle record information maintained in any context. Thus, we conclude the access to accident reports provided under section 550.065 is more specific than the general confidentiality provided under section 552.130. Accordingly, the city may not withhold any portion of the accident report under section 552.130. Accordingly, the city must release the submitted CR-3 accident report form to the requestor in its entirety pursuant to section 550.065(c)(4) of the Transportation 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 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 release of the remaining submitted information will interfere with a pending criminal investigation. Based on this representation, we conclude that section 552.108(a)(1) is generally applicable in this instance. 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). We note, however, that the information at issue includes a DIC-24 statutory warning and a DIC-25 notice of suspension. The city provided copies of these forms to the arrestee. You have not explained how releasing this information, which has already been seen by the arrestee, would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. See Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). Accordingly, the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms may not be withheld under section 552.108.

Additionally, section 552.108 does not except from disclosure "basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime." *Id.* § 552.108(c). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic "front-page" information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. See 531 S.W.2d

at 186-187; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Accordingly, with the exception of the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms and basic information, the city may withhold the remaining submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

We note the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms contain driver's license information subject to section 552.130 of the Government Code.¹ Section 552.130 provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license or driver's license issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release. *See* Gov't Code § 552.130(a)(1). Accordingly, the city must withhold the driver's license information we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the city must release the submitted CR-3 accident report form to the requestor in its entirety pursuant to section 550.065(c)(4) of the Transportation Code. With the exception of the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms and basic information, the city may withhold the remaining submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. In releasing the DIC-24 and DIC-25 forms, the city must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.130(a)(1) 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,



Britni Fabian
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

BF/eb

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions.

Ref: ID# 555986

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)