



January 26, 2015

Mr. John C. West
General Counsel
Office of the Inspector General
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
4616 Howard Lane, Suite 250
Austin, Texas 78728

OR2015-01445

Dear Mr. West:

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# 551301.

The Office of the Inspector General of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified investigation. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.102, 552.108, 552.134, and 552.147 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions 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 must reasonably explain how and why 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 submitted information pertains to an open and pending criminal investigation by the department. You state there may be evidence of criminal culpability on the part of one or more of the involved individuals, that could, if confirmed, lead to indictments and criminal prosecution of those individuals, and release of the information could compromise the

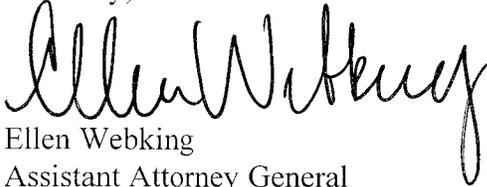
integrity of the investigation efforts. Further, you state release of anything other than basic information at this time could compromise the integrity of the investigation process and prosecutor's efforts. Based on this representation and our review, we conclude release of the information at issue would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of a crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court describes law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Therefore, we agree section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code is applicable to the submitted information.

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 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.¹

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,



Ellen Webking
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

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¹As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure. We note basic information under section 552.029(8) corresponds to the basic front-page information that may not be withheld under section 552.108 of the Government Code. *See* Gov't Code § 552.108(c); *Houston Chronicle*, 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; ORD No. 127 at 3-4.

Ref: ID# 551301

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)