



February 27, 2015

Ms. Amy L. Sims  
Deputy City Attorney  
Office of the City Attorney  
City of Lubbock  
P.O. Box 2000  
Lubbock, Texas 79457

OR2015-04022

Dear Ms. Sims:

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# 554926 (Lubbock File No. 1068).

The Lubbock Police Department (the "department") received a request for information concerning a specified report that involves a named individual. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

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 submitted information relates to a pending criminal investigation and the release of the

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<sup>1</sup>Although you also claim section 552.101 of the Government Code as an exception, you have not provided any arguments to support that assertion. Accordingly, we assume you have withdrawn it. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302.

information would harm that investigation. *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 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 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; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3–4 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of basic information, the department may generally withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

We note the requestor is a representative of the Texas Board of Nursing (the “board”). Section 411.125 of the Government Code provides:

The [board] is entitled to obtain from the [Department of Public Safety] criminal history record information maintained by the [Department of Public Safety] that relates to a person who:

- (1) is an applicant for or the holder of a license issued by the board;
- (2) has requested a determination of eligibility for a license from the board; or
- (3) is subject to investigation by the board in connection with a complaint or formal charge against the person.

Gov't Code § 411.125. In addition, section 411.087(a) of the Government Code provides:

(a) Unless otherwise authorized by Subsection (e), a person, agency, department, political subdivision, or other entity that is authorized by this subchapter to obtain from the [Department of Public Safety] criminal history record information maintained by the [Department of Public Safety] that relates to another person is authorized to:

...

- (2) obtain from any other criminal justice agency in this state criminal history record information maintained by that criminal justice agency that relates to that person.

*Id.* § 411.087(a)(2). “Criminal history record information” (“CHRI”) is defined as “information collected about a person by a criminal justice agency that consists of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, and

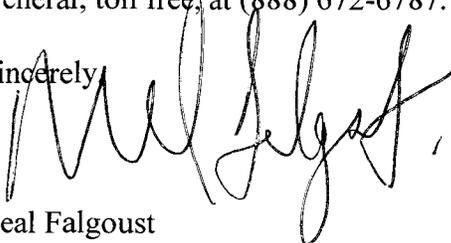
other formal criminal charges and their dispositions.” *See id.* § 411.082(2). Thus, under section 411.125, the board may have a right of access to CHRI about the named individual contained in the department’s records.

Accordingly, if the named individual is an applicant for a license from the board, a holder of a license from the board, has requested a determination of eligibility for a license from the board, or is subject to investigation by the board in connection with a complaint or formal charge, then the requestor is authorized to obtain the named individual’s CHRI contained in the submitted information pursuant to section 411.087(a)(2) of the Government Code. *See id.* §§ 411.087(a)(2), .082(2), .125(a). We note a specific statutory right of access overcomes the general exceptions in the Act, such as section 552.108. *See* 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 exceptions to disclosure under the Act), 623 at 3 (1994), 525 at 3 (1989). Thus, if any of these conditions are met, the department must make available to the requestor any CHRI under section 411.087. In that instance, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. However, if the individual who is named as the arrested person in the report does not meet any of the criteria in subsections 411.125(1)–(3), then the board does not have a special right of access to the CHRI under section 411.087. In that event, with the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(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](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/bhf

Ref: ID# 554926

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)