



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 16, 2015

Ms. Tiffany Evans
Assistant City Attorney
City of Houston
Legal Department
P.O. Box 368
Houston, Texas 77001-0368

OR2015-19348

Dear Ms. Evans:

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# 580118 (Houston GC No. 22491).

The Houston Emergency Center (the "center") received a request for several categories of information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note you have only submitted the responsive call sheet and 9-1-1 audio recordings. To the extent the center maintained any other responsive information on the date it received the request for information, we assume the center has released it. If the center has not released any such information, it must do so at this time. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible).

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

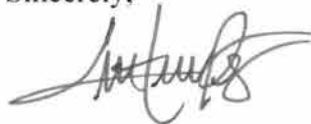
body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). Section 552.108 may be invoked by the proper custodian of information relating to a pending investigation or prosecution of criminal conduct. *See Open Records Decision No. 474 at 4-5 (1987)*. Where a non-law enforcement agency has custody of information that would otherwise qualify for exception under section 552.108 as information relating to the pending case of a law enforcement agency, the custodian of the records may withhold the information if it provides this office with a demonstration that the information relates to the pending case and a representation from the law enforcement agency that it wishes to have the information withheld.

You state the Houston Police Department (“the department”) advises the information submitted as Exhibits 2 and 3 relates to an open and active criminal investigation. Thus, you indicate the department objects to disclosure of the information at issue because its release would interfere with the investigation. Based on your representation, we conclude the center may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code on behalf of the department. *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).

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,



Cristian Rosas-Grillet
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CRG/cbz

Ref: ID# 5801118

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)