



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 28, 2017

Mr. Cedrick Collier
Public Information Officer
Harris County Sheriff's Office
1200 Baker Street, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77002-1206

OR2017-29217

Dear Mr. Collier:

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# 694962 (HCSO File 17SO8001587).

The Harris County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for information pertaining to a specified offense report. You state the sheriff's office has released some of the requested information. 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 the submitted information includes the intoxilyzer results of an individual's blood alcohol content. Section 724.018 of the Transportation Code provides "[o]n request of the person who has given a specimen at the request of a peace officer, full information concerning the analysis of the specimen shall be made available to the person or the person's attorney." Transp. Code § 724.018. The requestor is the person who provided the specimen at the request of a peace officer. Although you claim this information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code, a specific right of access provision prevails over the Act's general exceptions to disclosure. *See* Open Records Decision No. 451 at 4 (1986) (specific statutory right of access provisions overcome general exceptions to disclosure under statutory predecessor to Act). Therefore, the sheriff's office must release the intoxilyzer results, which we have marked, pursuant to section 724.018 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 must reasonably explain how and why section 552.108 is applicable to the information at issue. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A); *Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the remaining information relates to a pending criminal investigation or prosecution. Based on your representation and our review, we find 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 (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 remaining information.

We note, and you acknowledge, 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*. 531 S.W.2d at 186-87. *See* Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information made public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, with the exception of basic information and the intoxilyzer results, the sheriff’s office may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, the sheriff’s office must release the requestor’s intoxilyzer results, which we have marked, pursuant to section 724.018 of the Transportation Code. With the exception of basic information, the sheriff’s office may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The remaining information must be released.¹

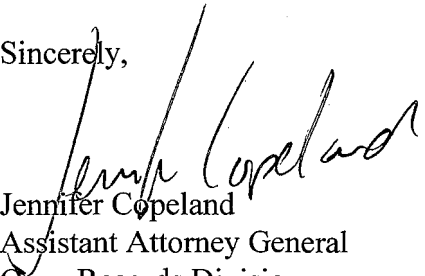
This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

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

¹We note the information being released contains the requestor’s social security number, to which the requestor has a right of access under section 552.023 of the Government Code. *See* Gov’t Code §§ 552.023(a), .147; Open Records Decision No. 481 at 4 (1987). We note 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. *See id.* § 552.147(b). Thus, if the sheriff’s office receives another request for this same information from a person who does not have such a right of access, section 552.147(b) authorizes the sheriff’s office to redact the requestor’s social security number.

providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Copeland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JC/gw

Ref: ID# 694962

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)