



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 19, 2019

Ms. Michelle Buendia
Assistant City Attorney
City of Dallas
1400 South Lamar, 6TH Floor 6W
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2019-07629

Dear Ms. Buendia:

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# 762262 (ORR# D004056-020719).

The Dallas Police Department (the "department") received a request for 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.

We note some of the submitted information was the subject of a previous request for information, in response to which this office issued Open Records Letter No. 2018-03988 (2018). In Open Records Letter No. 2018-03988, we concluded the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code on behalf of the district attorney's office. There is no indication the law, facts, and circumstances on which the prior ruling was based have changed. Accordingly, we conclude the department must continue to rely on Open Records Letter No. 2018-03988 as a previous determination and withhold or release the information at issue in accordance with that ruling. *See* Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) (so long as law, facts, and circumstances on which prior ruling was based have not changed, first type of previous determination exists

where requested information is precisely same information as was addressed in prior attorney general ruling, ruling is addressed to same governmental body, and ruling concludes information is or is not excepted from disclosure).

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: (1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must 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 district attorney’s office objects to the release of the remaining information because it pertains to a pending criminal investigation. Based upon this representation, we conclude the 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 that are 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.

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). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic 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 basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code on behalf of the district attorney’s office.

In summary, the department must continue to rely on Open Records Letter No. 2018-03988 as a previous determination and withhold or release the information at issue in accordance with that ruling. With the exception of basic information, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code on behalf of the district attorney’s office.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesse Harvey", written over a horizontal line.

Jesse Harvey
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JH/mo

Ref: ID# 762262

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)