



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 21, 2019

Ms. Brittaney N. Davis
Assistant City Attorney
City of Fort Worth
200 Texas Street, 3rd Floor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-6311

OR2019-23244

Dear Ms. Davis:

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# 789512 (ORR No. W087986).

The Fort Worth Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified incident. You state the department will release some information upon payment of costs. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the requested information contains department body worn camera video recordings. Body worn cameras are subject to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Chapter 1701 provides the procedures a requestor must follow when seeking a body worn camera recording. Section 1701.661(a) provides:

A member of the public is required to provide the following information when submitting a written request to a law enforcement agency for information recorded by a body worn camera:

- (1) the date and approximate time of the recording;
- (2) the specific location where the recording occurred; and

(3) the name of one or more persons known to be a subject of the recording.

Occ. Code § 1701.661(a). In this instance, the requestor does not give the requisite information under section 1701.661(a) for most of the submitted body worn camera videos. As the requestor did not properly request the body worn camera recordings at issue pursuant to chapter 1701, our ruling does not reach this information and it need not be released. However, pursuant to section 1701.661(b), a “failure to provide all the information required by Subsection (a) to be part of a request for recorded information does not preclude the requestor from making a future request for the same recorded information.” *Id.* § 1701.661(b). Further, we note the requestor provided the requisite information under section 1701.661(a) for the remaining body worn camera recording. Accordingly, the requestor properly requested one of the submitted body worn camera recordings, and we will consider the department’s argument against disclosure of this information.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code exempts 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(a)(1) must explain how and why the release of the information at issue 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, 710 (Tex. 1977). The department states the remaining information relates to a pending criminal investigation and prosecution. Based on this representation, we conclude the release of the information at issue 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, 186-87 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (delineating law enforcement interests present in active cases), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Therefore, the department may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, as the requestor did not properly request the body worn camera recordings at issue pursuant to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code, our ruling does not reach this information and it need not be released. The department may withhold the remaining 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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable

charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Britni Ramirez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Britni Ramirez
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

BR/eb

Ref: ID# 789512

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)