



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 10, 2022

Ms. Tiffany Bangs
Assistant County Attorney
Harris County
1019 Congress, 15th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002-1700

OR2022-07203

Dear Ms. Bangs:

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# 933893 (CA File No. 21PIA0986).

The Harris County Budget Management Department (the "department") received a request for three categories of information pertaining to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.160 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.160 of the Government Code provides, in relevant part:

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), the following information maintained by a governmental body is confidential:

(1) the name, social security number, house number, street name, and telephone number of an individual or household that applies for state or federal disaster recovery funds;

(2) the name, tax identification number, address, and telephone number of a business entity or an owner of a business entity that applies for state or federal disaster recovery funds; [and]

(3) any other information the disclosure of which would identify or tend to identify a person or household that applies for state or federal disaster recovery funds.

(c) The street name and census block group of and the amount of disaster recovery funds awarded to a person or household are not confidential after the date on which disaster recovery funds are awarded to the person or household.

Gov't Code § 552.160(b), (c); *see also id.* § 552.160(a); *id.* § 418.004(1) (defining “disaster” for purposes of section 552.160). You state the submitted information consists of confidential information concerning business entities or owners of business entities who applied for disaster recovery assistance. Based on your representations and our review, we find section 552.160 is applicable to some of the information at issue. However, we note some of the submitted information pertains to recovery funds which have been awarded and is therefore subject to section 552.160(c). Accordingly, with the exception of information subject to 552.160(c), which must be released, the department must withhold the submitted information under section 552.160 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,

Emily Kunst
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EK/jxd

Ref: ID# 933893

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)