



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 17, 2022

Ms. Victoria Jimenez  
Director of Legal Services  
Harris County Sheriff's Office  
1200 Baker Street  
Houston, Texas 77002

OR2022-24611

Dear Ms. Jimenez:

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# 966001 (HCSO File No. 22SO60036).

The Harris County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff's office") received a request for specified video recordings.<sup>1</sup> You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information. We have also received and considered comments submitted by a third party. *See* Gov't Code § 552.304 (providing that interested party may submit written comments regarding why information should or should not be released).

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." *Id.* § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses information protected by chapter 418 of the Government Code. As part of the Texas Homeland Security Act (the "HSA"), sections 418.176 through 418.182 were added to chapter 418 of the Government Code. These provisions make confidential certain information related to terrorism. Section 418.182(a) of the Government Code provides, in part, the following:

[I]nformation . . . in the possession of a governmental entity that relates to the specifications, operating procedures, or location of a security system

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<sup>1</sup> You state you sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222 (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

used to protect public or private property from an act of terrorism or related criminal activity is confidential.

*Id.* § 418.182(a). The fact that information may be related to a security system does not make the information *per se* confidential under section 418.182. *See* Open Records Decision No. 649 at 3 (1996) (language of confidentiality provision controls scope of its protection). Furthermore, the mere recitation by a governmental body of a statute’s key terms is not sufficient to demonstrate the applicability of a claimed provision. As with any confidentiality provision, a governmental body asserting section 418.182 must adequately explain how the responsive information falls within the scope of the statute. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must explain how claimed exception to disclosure applies).

You state the submitted information consists of surveillance video recordings made by cameras located in the Harris County Jail (the “jail”). You state the “surveillance video system is part of the jail’s security system.” You also assert release of this information would reveal “layout of the facility, camera location and angle, blind spots, video quality and clarity, camera ranges, and surveillance coverage within the jail.” Upon review, we agree the information at issue relates to the specifications, operating procedures, or location of a security system used to protect public or private property from an act of terrorism or related criminal activity. *See Tex. Dep’t of Pub. Safety v. Abbott*, 310 S.W.3d 670 (Tex. App.—Austin 2010, no pet.) (finding confidential under section 418.182 of the HSA video recording containing images recorded by security cameras in Texas Capitol hallway because specifications of security system included cameras’ capabilities and video recording demonstrated those capabilities through characteristics, quality, and clarity of images recorded). Accordingly, the sheriff’s office must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 418.182(a) 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,

Tim Neal  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

TN/mo

Ref: ID# 966001

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)