



THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
OF TEXAS

JIM MATTOX  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 15, 1990

Mr. Ron Lindsey  
Commissioner  
Texas Department of Human Services  
P.O. Box 149030  
Austin, Texas 78714-9030

OR90-184

Dear Mr. Lindsey:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Texas Open Records Act, article 6252-17a, V.T.C.S. Your request was assigned ID# 9416.

The Department of Human Services received a request for various documents relating to any contractual relationship between the department and a named individual. The requestor enumerated various kinds of documents that she seeks, but noted that it was her intention "to include any and every record in any form that relates to any contracts with or employment of" the named individual "not to exclude any record in whatever form by failing to specifically list the records or type of record." You indicate that the department has provided some of the documents to the requestor, including contracts and requests for proposals, and that the department is attempting to ascertain if it has any other information responsive to the request. You indicate that you have also sought clarification from the requestor concerning her request, asking her to identify more specifically the kind of information she is seeking, because you feel that her request is so broad that the department finds it difficult to respond to it.

We agree that the request for information here is broad and general. A request for information must sufficiently identify the information requested and an agency may ask for a clarification if it cannot reasonably understand a particular request. Open Records Decision Nos. 304 (1982); 23 (1974). A governmental body must make a good faith effort to advise the requestor of the type of documents available so that the requestor can narrow the request. See Open Records No. 87 (1975). You are now in the process of doing that. Therefore, we conclude that it is not yet

possible to determine whether any exceptions to disclosure apply to the information sought. It will not be possible to do so until the request is narrowed or clarified.

Because case law and prior published open records decisions resolve your request, we are resolving this matter with this informal letter ruling rather than with a published open records decision. If you have questions about this ruling, please refer to OR90-184.

Yours very truly,



David A. Newton  
Assistant Attorney General  
Opinion Committee

DAN/le

Ref.: ID# 9416, 9018

cc: Claudia Stravato  
Campaign Coordinator  
Bob Bullock for Lt. Governor  
405 West 14th Street  
P.O. Box 2243  
Austin, Texas 78768