



August 26, 2002

Ms. Alice Caruso
Assistant Disclosure Officer
Information Release
Texas Workforce Commission
101 East 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78778-0001

OR2002-4730

Dear Ms. Caruso:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 167935.

The Texas Workforce Commission (the "commission") received two requests for information pertaining to St. Mary's Nurse Aide Training Center, Inc./St. Mary Nurse Aide Training Center (the "center"), including the school's application and financial statements. You inform this office that some responsive information has been released to the requestors. You claim that the requested information may be excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.110, 552.113, and 552.131 of the Government Code. You make no arguments and take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under any of those exceptions. You state, and provide documentation showing, that you notified the center, the third party whose proprietary interests may be implicated by the request for information. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305 (permitting interested third party to submit to attorney general reasons why requested information should not be released); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (determining that statutory predecessor to Gov't Code § 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in Public Information Act in certain circumstances). You raise no exception to disclosure on behalf of the commission and make no arguments regarding the proprietary nature of the center's information.

As of the date of this letter, the center has not submitted to this office its reasons why the requested information should not be released. Consequently, the center has not provided this office with any basis to conclude that its responsive information is excepted from disclosure. See Gov't Code § 552.110(b) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual or evidentiary material, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that it actually faces competition and that substantial competitive injury would likely result from disclosure); Open Records Decision Nos. 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3 (1990). Accordingly, we find that the commission must release all of the submitted information to the requestors.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at 877/673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.--Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Texas Building and Procurement Commission at 512/475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. We note that a third party may challenge this ruling by filing suit seeking to withhold information from a requestor. Gov't Code § 552.325. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,



Cindy Nettles
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CN/jh

Ref: ID# 167935

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Barbara Ann Mize
5120 West 8th Street
Weslaco, Texas 78596
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Geraldo M. Gutierrez, President
St. Mary's Nurse Aide Training Center, Inc.
322 Bicentennial, Suite A
McAllen, Texas 78501
(w/o enclosures)

Jeff C. Riviera
2402 Old BHwy 83 East Suite 201
Weslaco, Texas 78596
(w/o enclosures)