



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

May 12, 2008

Ms. Margo Kaiser  
Staff Attorney - Open Records Unit  
Texas Workforce Commission  
101 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78778-0001

OR2008-06421

Dear Ms. Kaiser:

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# 309769.

The Texas Workforce Commission (the "commission") received a request for information pertaining to a specified investigation into the requestor's agency. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.111, and 552.116 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.<sup>1</sup>

Section 552.116 of the Government Code provides as follows:

(a) An audit working paper of an audit of the state auditor or the auditor of a state agency, an institution of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, a county, a municipality, or a joint board operating under Section 22.074, Transportation Code, is excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021. If information in an audit working paper is also maintained in another record, that other record is not excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021 by this section.

(b) In this section:

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<sup>1</sup>We assume that the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. See Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

(1) "Audit" means an audit authorized or required by a statute of this state or the United States, the charter or an ordinance of a municipality, an order of the commissioners court of a county, or a resolution or other action of a joint board described by Subsection (a) and includes an investigation.

(2) "Audit working paper" includes all information, documentary or otherwise, prepared or maintained in conducting an audit or preparing an audit report, including:

(A) intra-agency and interagency communications; and

(B) drafts of the audit report or portions of those drafts.

Gov't Code § 552.116. You explain that the commission is authorized by state law to administer programs funded through the U.S. Department of Labor, including programs funded through the Workforce Investment Act (the "WIA"). *See* Labor Code § 302.021(a)(7). You further explain that the commission is responsible for the administration and oversight of WIA funds granted to the requestor's agency, the North Texas Human Resources Group. You state that the commission has adopted regulations regarding the oversight and monitoring responsibilities of WIA recipients, including the requestor's agency. You explain that, by commission rule, subrecipients and contract service providers are subject to audit and review by the commission, and that the commission may audit and review all relevant records to determine subrecipient and contract service provider performance. *See* 40 T.A.C. § 800.303(c) (subrecipients and contract service providers subject to audit by commission).<sup>2</sup> Finally, you state that the submitted information consists of working papers of an ongoing compliance audit and investigation of the requestor's agency, a subcontractor receiving federal WIA funds from the commission. Based on your arguments and our review, we agree that the submitted information consists of audit working papers that the commission may withhold under section 552.116.<sup>3</sup>

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

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<sup>2</sup>We note that although the commission cites to 20 T.A.C. § 800.303, we understand it to raise 40 T.A.C. § 800.303 regarding its program monitoring authority.

<sup>3</sup>As our ruling on this issue is dispositive, we need not address your remaining arguments against disclosure.

governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must file suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such a challenge, 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).

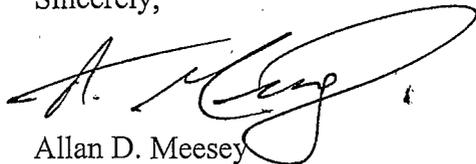
If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, 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 challenge that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. 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 Office of the Attorney General 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. 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,



Allan D. Meesey  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

ADM/eeg

Ref: ID# 309769

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Ms. Stephanie Jones  
North Texas Human Resources Group, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1604  
Denton, Texas 76202  
(w/o enclosures)