



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 31, 2017

Ms. Melanie Rodney
Assistant County Attorney
Harris County
2525 Holly Hall, Suite 190
Houston, Texas 77054

OR2017-24863

Dear Ms. Rodney:

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# 682466 (CA File No. 17HSP0660).

The Harris County Hospital District d/b/a Harris Health System (the "district") received a request for six categories of information pertaining to a specified district position and the requestor's client's personnel file.¹ You state you have released some information to the requestor. Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of CPS HR Consulting ("CPS HR"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified CPS HR of the request and of its right to submit arguments to this office. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

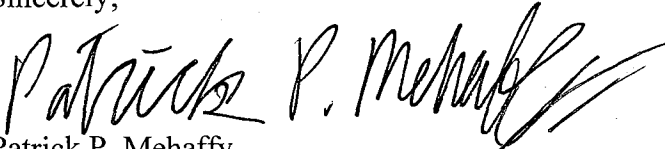
¹You state the district sought and received clarification of the request for information. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (stating if information requested is unclear to governmental body or if large amount of information has been requested, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify or narrow request, but may not inquire into purpose for which information will be used); *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380 (Tex. 2010) (holding when governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification of unclear or overbroad request for public information, ten-business-day period to request attorney general opinion is measured from date request is clarified or narrowed).

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this ruling, we have not received comments from CPS HR. Thus, we have no basis to conclude CPS HR has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the district may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest CPS HR may have in the information. The district must release the submitted information.

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 http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Patrick P. Mehaffy
Attorney
Open Records Division

PPM/eb

Ref: ID# 682466

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)