



Lawrence F. Alwin, CPA
State Auditor

A Special Investigations Unit Report Regarding The Texas School for the Deaf

August 14, 2002

Members of the Legislative Audit Committee:

An investigation by the State Auditor's Office Special Investigations Unit (SIU) led to the Travis County Grand Jury's indictment of Donna S. Fine, a former employee of the Texas School for the Deaf (School). The Travis County District Attorney's Office Public Integrity Unit is prosecuting Ms. Fine for fraudulent use of identifying information, which is a state jail felony. The School contacted the SIU to report the allegation and initiate the investigation.

The indictment charges that between February 2001 and April 2002 Ms. Fine used other School employees' identifying information to obtain services and goods from local physicians and pharmacists. Ms. Fine allegedly used information such as names, dates of birth, social security numbers, and medical insurance information to obtain services and goods through a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and the Relay Texas service. The School employees' physicians informed the employees of the abuses of their medical services. When the employees determined that they were not the cause of the abuse, they reported the abuses to the School's Human Resources Department.

If you have any questions, contact either Ralph Disher, Senior Investigator, or John Weber, Manager, Special Investigations Unit, at (512) 936-9500.

Sincerely,

Lawrence F. Alwin, CPA
State Auditor

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cc: Ms. Claire Bugen, Superintendent, Texas School for the Deaf
Mr. Ronald Earle, Travis County District Attorney

The **Telecommunications Device for the Deaf** or TDD (sometimes known as TTY or TT) is a device used by people with hearing and speech impairments who can not use a standard telephone. This device identifies the caller only as hearing or speech impaired; it does not identify the caller.

Relay Texas is a telephone interpreting service that translates calls between people using TDDs and people using standard telephones.

The **Special Investigations Unit** investigates reports of illegal activity involving state agencies and universities.

Texas Government Code, Section 321.022, requires state agencies and universities to report suspected fraud or unlawful conduct to the State Auditor's Office if there are facts that point to fraud or unlawful conduct.

To report suspected illegal activity, call 1-800-TX-AUDIT (1-800-892-8348), send a fax to (512) 936-9400, visit www.sao.state.tx.us, or mail information to the State Auditor's Office, Attn: SIU, P.O. Box 12067, Austin, Texas 78711.

