

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

Title: Confidentiality
Procurement Rule No.: P-050

Approved by:
Date: 6/4/96

I. Purpose

To identify the confidential nature of purchasing and purchasing-related transactions.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all University employees.

III. General

It is recognized that most of the transactions relating to Purchasing may be considered to be a confidential nature--especially with regard to our vendors and our competitors. However, the State of Texas has determined that Bid and Purchase documents are public information and are included in the Open Records Act. Bid Documents are confidential and proprietary to the Bid Process until such time that they are publicly opened.

From time to time, purchasing personnel may become aware of potential bid amounts. This information must be held in strictest confidence until such times as the bids are received and made public. Overheard phone calls, documents on desks during vendor interviews, and conversations between Buyers within hearing of vendors in other offices are some examples. An awareness of this sort of situation should be created so that it may be avoided.

Passage of pricing information from an employee of the University to an employee of a competitor is not only unethical, but is likely to be in violation of one or more of the various antitrust laws and should be scrupulously avoided. See Policy P-030, Antitrust Laws, for additional details.

All files within the Purchasing Department are to be maintained in an up-to-date and confidential manner. Access to these files and any other documentation found within this department shall be restricted to those authorized by the Director of Procurement and General Services. See Procedure PP-250, Procurement and General Services Files.

Anyone requesting Procurement related information under the Open Records Act must submit the request in writing and provide a self addressed stamped envelope for the return of the requested information. A bid summary will be furnished at no charge. Requests for all other documents will be charged on a cost recovery basis

IV. Exception

Vendors may verbally request of copy of an outstanding bid.