



# The Solano County Auditor-Controller's Whistleblower Program Status Update As of December 31, 2013

## Significant Issues Update

The Auditor-Controller's Internal Audit Division operates the County's Whistleblower Program. The Program includes a special hotline number (866) 384-TIPS and a website for submission of reports. The reports received were reviewed by the Internal Audit Division in cooperation with Appointed and Elected Department Heads and the County Administrator as deemed appropriate.

From July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013, the Whistleblower Program received 28 reports of perceived incidence of fraud, waste and abuse, or violations of County policy or law. In addition, two (2) cases unresolved as of our last report have been closed and outcomes are reported below.

Reports were received in the following categories:

- violations of Law/County policy (11)
- welfare fraud (8)
- timesheet fraud (3)
- management conduct (2)
- waste of County funds (1)
- conflict of interest (1)
- other (4)

Of the 30 cases:

- Fifteen were found to not have merit.
- Four were referred to outside agencies and were closed under the Whistleblower Program without a determination of merit or no merit.
- One remains open with investigation in progress.
- Eleven were substantiated and found to have merit.

Details about the eleven cases found to have merit follow:

<i>Complaint Allegation</i>	<i>Resolution</i>
A citizen reported she received mail from Solano County which contained information meant for her, as well as personal and sensitive information regarding another individual.	The complaint was referred to the Solano County Compliance Officer, who investigated the complaint. The Compliance Officer reported the incident to the California Department of Healthcare Services. In addition, the Compliance Officer notified the individual whose information was breached and the steps to

	<p>take to protect his/her identity and credit. There was no evidence the reporting party's information was mishandled. The Department of Healthcare Services downgraded this as an incident instead of a reportable breach.</p>
<p>A report was received alleging a County employee distributed confidential information to a County contractor. Additionally, it was reported the same individual made unprofessional remarks to an outside contact.</p>	<p>It was determined the employee knowingly distributed the confidential information although against department policy. However, the contractor stated the employee did not make unprofessional remarks. The manager took appropriate disciplinary action.</p>
<p>Two reports were received regarding an employee keeping her baby at work after the baby finished breastfeeding.</p>	<p>Investigation into the complaint revealed the baby was brought to the workplace to be breastfed. The employee's supervisor allowed breastfeeding accommodations. The supervisor reminded her the baby may not remain in the workplace once feeding was finished.</p>
<p>A citizen reported plastic trash has been blowing into his yard from a nearby shopping center. Further, the citizen was concerned the plastic should be recycled in accordance with state law.</p>	<p>The complaint was referred to the City of Vacaville Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement met with the General Manager of the shopping center. They discussed maintenance schedules and recommended a lid be placed on a large trash bin.</p>
<p>A report was received alleging a County employee reported hours worked on days the employee had actually taken off. It was additionally reported the employee had accepted an illegal gratuity.</p>	<p>The Internal Audit Division (IAD) examined and resolved discrepancies with the help from the employee's manager. The IAD made recommendations to the Department to adjust the employee's timesheet and to adhere to the County's time reporting policy and Code of Ethics.</p>
<p>A report was received alleging a County employee encouraged a contractor to hire an immediate relative. Additionally, the relative was permitted to use the employee's login information on a County computer.</p>	<p>It was determined the employee did not disclose their business relationship with the contractor, and the manager took appropriate personnel action. However, hiring a relative and the use of the employee's login information was not substantiated.</p>
<p>A citizen reported receiving a solicitation for donations from an individual claiming to be a County employee. The citizen called to question the validity of the solicitor's claim.</p>	<p>The Sheriff's Office investigated and determined the solicitations were made by a marketing vendor for a non-profit organization. The non-profit terminated its contract with the vendor due to their deceptive tactics.</p>

Eight cases were referred to the H&SS Special Investigations Bureau (SIB) for investigation into alleged welfare fraud. Two of those cases were found to have merit.	The SIB took appropriate corrective action as prescribed by their directives related to instances of confirmed welfare fraud.
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The Whistleblower Program continues to demonstrate success in the identification of County-related matters in potential fraud, waste and abuse. The Program continues to improve controls, and promotes accountability and oversight throughout the County by providing a process for employees and other County citizens to report perceived incidence of fraud, waste and abuse.

For questions, contact Katie Tully at (707) 784-3057.