



To: Board of Supervisors  
From: Phyllis Taynton, CPA, Auditor-Controller  
Date: March 20, 2019  
Subject: Significant Issues Update

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### **Whistleblower Program Update, July 1 – December 31, 2018**

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

From July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018, the Division received 43 complaints of perceived incidence of fraud, waste, and abuse, or violations of County policy or law through the Whistleblower Program. Of the 43 complaints, 4 were determined not to be County Whistleblower matters because the complaint failed to provide sufficient information, or the allegation was not within the scope of the County's Whistleblower Program. As a result, 39 cases reviewed this period.

In addition to the 39 new complaints, there were 4 complaints from our last report still under review. As of this update, 3 of those 4 remain open with an investigation in progress and 1 was closed. This brought the total caseload to 43.

The 43 WB complaints reviewed are summarized by category as follows:

- 14 Violations of law and/or County policy
- 8 Welfare fraud
- 7 Timesheet fraud
- 3 Management Conduct
- 3 Waste of County Funds
- 8 Other

Of the 43 complaints:

- 9 Were substantiated and found to have merit
- 21 Were determined to not have merit
- 6 Remain open with an investigation in progress (categorized as follows):
  - 2 Violations of law and/or County policy
  - 2 Welfare Fraud
  - 2 Timesheet fraud
- 5 Were closed due to insufficient information
- 2 Were referred to appropriate agencies and were closed

Details about the 9 complaints found to have merit are as follows:

<b><i>Complaint Allegation(s)</i></b>	<b><i>Resolution</i></b>
One department manager was continuing to use an old office space even after being relocated to another County building.	The Division investigated the complaint and determined it had merit. The manager was asked to vacate the old office space by a given date.
A County program is accepting and distributing goods to clients as part of a state program but has allowed the program renewal to lapse.	The department states this is accurate and is working with the program to complete the proper steps of correction.
One department manager was commuting to and from work using the program's vehicle without the proper Take Home Vehicle authorization.	The Division investigated the complaint and determined it had merit. The department has discontinued employee's use of the vehicle outside of work hours until a Take Home Vehicle Authorization form is submitted and approved by the CAO.
One department manager was accused of sexual harassment.	The County Human Resources department was already aware of the complaint and was actively investigating the employee.
One County department was allowing staff to flex their schedules without the proper authorization.	The County's Human Resources department instructed the department head that staff needed to adhere to their assigned work schedules.
A department manager was accused of wasteful spending of county funds by purchasing non-standard computer equipment.	The purchase of non-standard equipment required additional County resources to make the equipment work on the county infrastructure. The purchase resulted in wasteful spending of approximately \$17,000. The issue was addressed through the disciplinary process.
Two County employees were not abiding by the Driver Performance Policy while driving a County vehicle.	The County Fleet Department contacted each employee's department manager. Each employee was verbally counseled and will be completing an online driving course.
8 complaints of alleged welfare fraud were referred to H&SS Special Investigations Bureau (SIB) for investigation.	The complaints were investigated by SIB. One complaint was found to have merit while five complaints were found to not have merit. Two complaints are still open with an investigation in progress.

The Whistleblower Program continues to serve as a successful tool to aide in the identification of County-related matters of potential fraud, waste, and abuse. The Program looks at and addresses 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 in policy and practice.

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