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Investigations of Improper Activities by State Agencies and Employees

Inefficient Management of State Resources, Misuse of State Time and Inaccurate Attendance Records, and Inadequate Supervision

Background

The California Whistleblower Protection Act (Whistleblower Act) empowers the State Auditor to investigate allegations of improper governmental activities by state agencies and employees. The Whistleblower Act defines an “improper governmental activity” as an action by a state agency or employee during the performance of official duties that violates a law; is economically wasteful; or involves gross misconduct, incompetence, or inefficiency. Since 1993, when the State Auditor activated the hotline, it has identified improper governmental activities that have cost the State a total of nearly \$578 million.

Key Findings

From July 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018, the State Auditor’s Office:

- Received nearly 1,100 calls or inquiries from the whistleblower hotline, facsimile, mail, website, in-person visit, or an internal source, of which almost 640 were within our jurisdiction.
- Conducted work on over 800 cases that were opened either in previous periods or the current period.
- Investigated and substantiated allegations independently or with the assistance of other state agencies. This report details the results of eight of those investigations, including the following:
 - » Thirty employees at several agencies misused state time and cost the State approximately \$150,000.
 - One department overpaid 25 managers and supervisors, in total approximately \$72,000, who did not charge sufficient leave when absent for whole days. We estimate that the total overpayments made to all similarly affected employees at that department could be more than \$500,000.
 - Three engineers at another department cost the State more than \$48,000 in salaries paid for work the employees did not perform because they arrived late to work, took extended lunches, left work early, or failed to accurately report absences.
 - An employee at another department improperly claimed bereavement leave and over 170 hours of work that wasn’t performed costing the State over \$8,400.
 - A campus police officer regularly took time to lie down, at times slept while on duty, or did not work over a two-year period resulting in over \$20,000 of wasted funds.
 - » Several supervisors at various departments provided inadequate supervision by failing to monitor performance, time, and attendance of their employees.

Status of 808 Cases, July 2018 Through December 2018

