



COUNTY OF VENTURA

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

Employee Fraud Hotline Report *Update #18* For the Period January through June 2010

Three ways to contact the Hotline:

Call:
(805) 644-6019



Write:
Employee Fraud Hotline
Ventura County Auditor-Controller
Administration Building L#1540
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

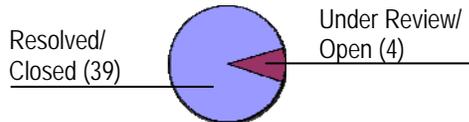
E-Mail*:
Fraud.Hotline@ventura.org
* E-mail is not confidential.

I am pleased to present the Semi-Annual Report of the Employee Fraud Hotline for the period January through June 2010. The Employee Fraud Hotline was established as an avenue to report fraud, waste, and abuse occurring at the County of Ventura. I encourage employees to resolve concerns through their normal administrative channels whenever possible. However, the Employee Fraud Hotline provides an alternative reporting mechanism to ensure that concerns about possible wrongdoing in our County government are properly addressed. This report reflects information provided to the Board of Supervisors on August 3, 2010.

*Christine L. Cohen
Auditor-Controller*

Hotline Activity at a Glance . . . During January through June 2010, the Employee Fraud Hotline received 43 new complaints of improper activity, of which we pursued 31 (72%). Eleven of the new issues were not pursued because the complainants were redirected to other hotlines or other appropriate agencies, and one issue was not pursued due to insufficient information.

As of June 30, 2010, most of the 43 new issues have been resolved/closed:



During January through June 2010, we resolved/closed a total of 47 Hotline issues out of the 61 total complaints that were under review/open (43 new complaints and 18 complaints from prior periods):

Summary Outcomes of 47 Hotline Issues Resolved/Closed during January-June 2010

Substantiated (see description below)	7
Unsubstantiated	28
Redirected to Other Hotlines/Agencies	11
Insufficient Information	1

For most of the 43 new issues, the complainants chose to remain anonymous:

Anonymous	74%
Not Anonymous	26%

DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS

- Consumer Fraud.** A company misled consumers in soliciting property tax reassessment services for a fee. The owner of the company pled guilty to 12 misdemeanor counts of disclosure violation for unsolicited mailing. The owner was sentenced to 3 years summary probation and 250 hours of community service, and ordered to pay restitution pursuant to any civil judgment.
- Improper Sharing of Passwords with Interns.** Employees inappropriately shared computer passwords with interns. Employees were to be counseled and policies were to be reviewed with supervisors.
- Improper Access to Client Information.** Interns were assigned tasks that resulted in inappropriate access to confidential client information. Policies were to be reviewed with center directors and supervisors.
- Time Abuse.** An employee did not adjust time reported when absent from work. Payroll adjustments were made and action was to be taken to address employee and supervisory time reporting practices.
- Improper Hiring Practice.** A job applicant was removed from an interview list due to lack of bilingual skills when no notification was previously given that bilingual skills were required. The hiring department will provide appropriate information to certification staff in the future to ensure a proper certification process.
- Time Abuse.** An employee abused work hours by falling asleep on County time. The employee was advised of the requirement to notify management of issues affecting the employee's ability to work.
- Misuse of County Computer.** An employee inappropriately used a County computer for personal use during work hours. The matter was addressed with management and the employee was counseled.