



CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR

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FACT SHEET

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Report: I2011-1

The California State Auditor released the following report today:

Investigations of Improper Activities by State Agencies and Employees

July 2010 Through March 2011

BACKGROUND

Since July 1993 the State Auditor's Office has identified improper governmental activities costing the State roughly \$30.5 million and other improper governmental activities having unquantifiable monetary effects in terms of dollars but apparent negative social impacts. The California Whistleblower Protection Act (Whistleblower Act) empowers the State Auditor to perform investigations into complaints that state agencies and employees have engaged in improper governmental activities. The Whistleblower Act defines an "improper governmental activity" as any action by a state agency or employee relating to state government that violates any state or federal law, is wasteful, or involves gross misconduct, incompetence, or inefficiency.

KEY FINDINGS

From July 1, 2010, through March 31, 2011, the State Auditor's Office:

- Received 4,428 calls or inquiries from the Whistleblower hotline, mail, or the State Auditor's Web site.
- Conducted analyses, reviews, and investigations of 1,189 cases opened during this or a prior period.
- Completed and reported on seven investigations that it substantiated—or jointly substantiated with other state agencies—that state agencies or employees have engaged in improper governmental activities, including the following:
 - ✓ The Department of Mental Health wasted at least \$51,244 in state funds in 2009—the one-year period that we examined—by employing a senior official who spent most of his state-compensated time on activities unrelated to his job.
 - ✓ The chief psychologist at a correctional facility operated by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation used his state-compensated time and state equipment to perform work related to his private psychology practice, costing the State up to an estimated \$212,261 in lost productivity over a nearly five-year period.
 - ✓ Several departments paid employees a total of \$21,462 more than they were entitled to receive:
 - An employee and a personnel specialist at the California Energy Commission falsified time and attendance records to provide the employee \$6,589 more than she was entitled to receive.
 - A manager at the Department of Fish and Game cost the State \$8,282 over a nine-month period by improperly directing an employee to use a state vehicle for commuting between home and work locations.
 - An employee with the State Controller's Office failed to report an estimated 322 hours of absences over an 18-month period and thus, the State paid the employee \$6,591 for hours she did not work.

This report also summarizes corrective actions taken or not taken on previously reported investigations. State departments must report to the State Auditor's Office any corrective action taken in response to an investigation no later than 60 days after we notify the agency or authority of the improper activity and monthly until corrective action is completed. For example, after a January 2011 investigative report revealed that a now-retired manager from the Department of General Services improperly used state vehicles for his daily commute for several years, it signed an agreement in June 2011 directing him to reimburse the State \$12,379 for his misuse of state vehicles.

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To report suspected improper governmental activities, contact the Whistleblower Hotline: (800) 952-5665 or (866) 293-8729 (TTY), mail information to the bureau, or submit a complaint online to www.bsa.ca.gov.

