



Elaine M. Howle *State Auditor*

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## Investigations of Improper Activities by State Agencies and Employees

*Misuse of State Time, Economically Wasteful Activities, and Misuse of State Property*

### 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’s definition of an “improper governmental activity” includes any 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 approximately \$578 million.

To submit complaints of state employee misconduct, contact us through one of the following methods:

Whistleblower Hotline | 1.800.952.5665

auditor.ca.gov/hotline

INVESTIGATIONS, California State Auditor  
PO Box 1019 | Sacramento | CA | 95812

Whistleblower FAX line | 916.322.2603

### Key Findings

From July 1, 2017 through June 2018, the State Auditor’s Office:

- Received roughly 1,330 calls or inquiries within its jurisdiction from the whistleblower hotline, facsimile, mail, website, in person visit, or an internal source.
- Conducted work on approximately 1,480 cases that were opened either in previous periods or the current period.
- Investigated and substantiated allegations independently or with the assistance of another state agency. This report details the results of seven of those investigations that involved the following:
  - » Misuse state time and inaccurate attendance records—we substantiated that four employees at several agencies either took extended breaks, left early from work, or slept at their desk for extended periods of time during work hours and cost the State approximately \$160,000.
  - » Economically wasteful activities—in one case that we substantiated, a licensed vocational nurse was reassigned from her nursing activities to perform duties typically performed by an office technician, who is generally paid at a much lower salary, over an extended period of time.
  - » Misuse of state property—one employee used his staff to build an unauthorized structure on state property.

#### OVER THE YEARS OUR INVESTIGATIONS HAVE RESULTED IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

12	Convictions
88	Job terminations
22	Demotions
27	Resignations or retirements while under investigation
58	Pay reductions
340	Reprimands
32	Suspensions without pay