

[date]

[Name]

[Addressee]

[Address]

Dear:

As you may know, the California State Auditor's Office is responsible for administering the provisions of the California Whistleblower Protection Act (the "Act"), found at Government Code section 8547 et seq. The Act authorizes the State Auditor to accept complaints from state employees and members of the public regarding alleged improper governmental activities by state agencies, departments, and employees. Upon receiving such a complaint, my office may conduct an investigation into the improper activity alleged and issue a report on the findings of the investigation after an allegation is substantiated. You may view our investigative reports on our Web site at <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/reports/investigative>.

In addition to assigning the above-described responsibilities to my office, the Act also assigns two very important ongoing responsibilities to your office. First, as provided in Government Code section 8548.2, the Act requires every state agency and department to print and post a notice prepared by my office regarding whistleblower reporting and protections. The notice must be posted at the office or offices of the agency or department in a location or locations where employee notices are maintained. The agency or department may not edit the written text of the notice; although it may publish the notice in any manner it chooses and may include its own introductory language in the notice, provided the language and format selected do not alter the meaning of the notice. We recently updated the notice to reflect that my office now has authority to receive complaints regarding the courts and court employees and to investigate those complaints. The notice, formatted as an 11 inch by 17 inch poster, is available for printing from our website at <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/pdfs/other/whstlblr.pdf>.

Second, as provided in Government Code section 8548.3, the Act requires every state agency and department to send the information contained in the notice by electronic mail to each of its employees who have authorized access to electronic mail. The information must be sent to the employees of the agency or department every year. Please send the information this year by no later than April 1, 2011. We have prepared a memorandum in an electronic format that you may use to fulfill this notification requirement. It is available to download from our website at <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/hotline/notification>.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Thank you for your cooperation in complying with the requirements of the Act. If you have any questions, please contact Steven Russo, Chief of Investigations, at (916) 445-0255.

Sincerely,

ELAINE M. HOWLE, CPA  
State Auditor

Enclosures