



## INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

2007-03-0054

October 29, 2008

### HENRY COUNTY FSSA FOODSTAMP FRAUD

*Inspector General staff attorney Amanda Schaeffer, after an investigation by OIG Special Agent Darrell Boehmer, reports as follows:*

This investigation involved a state employee of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) who was in charge of issuing food stamp and TANF funds to qualifying applicants, but misappropriated these funds to her personal use.

The United States Food Stamp Program is a federal assistance program that provides food to deserving United States citizens. Benefits are distributed by the individual states, but the program is administered through the United States Department of Agriculture. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is another federal assistance program which provides cash assistance to indigent American families with dependent children. It is administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and these benefits are likewise distributed by the individual states through agencies such as FSSA.

Julie Stanton was hired by FSSA in 2002 by the Wayne County FSSA

office in Richmond. In 2004 she transferred to the Henry County office in the New Castle Office and was promoted to Caseworker Supervisor on January 10, 2005. Her duties for FSSA were administering food stamp and TANF money to deserving families.

On March 27, 2007, Stanton went on leave, and later resigned from FSSA on August 15, 2007.

An investigation was commenced, involving search warrants, the review of documents and multiple interviews. The results showed that Stanton's identity computer code had been used to authorize multiple fictitious individuals to receive food stamp and TANF funds.

One individual named as a recipient under Stanton's authorization was interviewed and stated that she had never applied for or received public assistance out of Stanton's office. This individual also confirmed that the dependents listed in her case were fictitious.

Several fictitious accounts also gave the delivery address of the funds to that of Stanton's boyfriend.

Eight children were eventually established by Stanton at this address to receive funds, all of them being fictitious persons.

Two of the fictitious children created in the system were entered with the birthdates of Stanton's children.

The fictitious accounts also used social security numbers and birthdates that were one digit off those of Stanton's children.

Furthermore, the computer system sends alerts when fictitious social

security numbers are being used. These alerts went to Stanton as indications of fraud, and no action was taken by her.

These facts were presented to the Prosecuting Attorney in Henry County and criminal charges resulted.

Dated this 30<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2008.

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David O. Thomas".

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David O. Thomas, Inspector General