



INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

2007-08-0175

December 17, 2008

MILEAGE FRAUD

Inspector General David O. Thomas and Attorney Amanda Schaeffer, after an investigation by Special Agent Dave Clark, report as follows:

This investigation resulted from a report that an employee from the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) was submitting false mileage claims. The ISDH assisted in the investigation.

Documents were reviewed, witnesses were interviewed and legal research was conducted. The results showed that Respondent was a Long Term Care Public Health Nurse Supervisor with the ISDH. Her job was to oversee citations involving certifications and licensing in long term health care facilities or nursing homes. Her duties were to hire, discipline and counsel subordinates as well as monitor their training.

The investigation revealed that Respondent turned in claims for travel reimbursement for trips that were never made. These trips generally were confined to the Indianapolis area, although on 13 occasions she submitted travel

for longer distances that included sites as far away as Clarksville, Crawfordsville, Terre Haute, and Richmond.

Witnesses confirmed that Respondent was not observed at the locations submitted on the travel vouchers on several of the dates in question.

Documentation and agency policies also refuted Respondent's claims that she was not observed at these locations because she would make her reviews and make telephone calls from her vehicle.

A review of Respondent's cellular telephone records also revealed that calls were made from locations contrary to those made in her travel reimbursement documentation. The travel dates were also inconsistent.

State employees are permitted to submit mileage claims for travel expense reimbursement related to their employment if the travel is properly documented with mileage vouchers. See: *Budget Agency Circular 2003-1, Section 5-3; SBOA State and Quasi Agency Manual, Chapter 11; Indiana Department of Administration regulations at http://www.in.gov/idoa/files/Travel_Update.pdf.*

In summary, the investigation found that Respondent's mileage vouchers were false or erroneous in 25 trips submitted for reimbursement. The total reimbursement for these 25 trips was \$538.40, with the allegation of 1,346 miles traveled. There were six trips that were not reimbursed to her in July of 2007, which amounted to \$88.80, with the allegation of 222 miles traveled.

Falsifying mileage claims for reimbursement can constitute a violation of the Use of State Property Rule in 42 IAC 1-5-12 in the Indiana Code of Ethics.

This information was submitted through a filed complaint with the State Ethics Commission (SEC) and Respondent later admitted to the violation. The Commission

then found on December 2, 2008, that 42 IAC 1-5-12 had been violated and sanctioned
Responded with a fine in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Dated this 17th day of December, 2008.

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

David O. Thomas, Inspector General