



## INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

2013-04-0088

September 3, 2013

### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COMPLAINT

*Office of Inspector General Staff Attorney Todd Shumaker, after an investigation by Special Agent Chuck Coffin, reports as follows:*

On April 26, 2013 the Office of Inspector General (OIG) was contacted by the Lieutenant Governor's Office via the Investigative Hotline relaying a complaint from a constituent and reporting party (RP) regarding services she was not receiving from FSSA. Specifically, RP complained: 1) FSSA and its divisions had failed repeatedly to provide her with services and auditory devices in a timely manner and 2) FSSA had failed to honor a contract she had entered into with the agency.

The OIG is charged by the Indiana General Assembly to address fraud, waste and abuse in state agencies. IC 4-2-7-2(b). The OIG is further responsible for initiating, supervising and coordinating investigations. IC 4-2-7-3(1).

OIG Special Agent Chuck Coffin was assigned to the case and interviewed RP and other FSSA personnel as part of his investigation. Special Agent Coffin found the following.

RP had been in touch with the FSSA rehabilitation counselor (Counselor) assigned to her regarding the auditory device issue but did not feel that satisfactory progress was being made. RP provided Special Agent Coffin with her email messages to Counselor to document the communications between the two of them. Special Agent Coffin contacted Counselor regarding RP's concern and learned from Counselor that RP needs to complete an auditory exam before she can proceed any further. Although Counselor has reached out to RP about arranging for this exam, she has received no response from RP and, therefore, cannot move forward on RP's request to obtain the auditory devices.

Special Agent Coffin further requested from Counselor any information and documentation she had regarding the contract between RP and FSSA. Counselor responded to Special Agent Coffin that, while Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) with FSSA does not provide any contracts or grants, it does offer assistance to clients in starting small businesses. RP had indeed requested such assistance; however, she communicated to the counselor that she wanted to address some of the other VR services she was receiving before turning her attention to starting a small business with VR assistance. Counselor advised Special Agent Coffin that RP should contact her counselor if she was ready to move forward with starting up her small business, and VR would be happy to help.

Special Agent Coffin's investigation revealed no violation of criminal laws or ethics rules by FSSA staff in their dealings with RP, nor did it uncover any contract administration issues. Rather, the concerns made by RP appeared to

arise out of miscommunication with the agency. Finding no merit upon which to proceed with the investigation, Special Agent Coffin recommends the case be closed and referred back to FSSA for appropriate action. Should additional evidence be brought forward, this case may be evaluated for further action. At this time and for these reasons, this case is closed.

APPROVED BY:

/s/ David O. Thomas, Inspector General