



AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

Employee Fraud Hotline Report

For the Period July through December 2019 Update #37

I am pleased to present the Semiannual Report of the Employee Fraud Hotline for the period July through December 2019. The Employee Fraud Hotline was established as an avenue to report fraud, waste, and abuse occurring at the County of Ventura. I encourage employees to resolve concerns through their normal administrative channels whenever possible. However, the Employee Fraud Hotline provides an alternative reporting mechanism to ensure that concerns about possible wrongdoing in our County government are properly addressed. This report reflects information provided to the Board of Supervisors on February 4, 2020.

Jeffery S. Burgh Auditor-Controller

THREE WAYS TO CONTACT THE HOTLINE

Call:

(805) 644-6019

Write:

Employee Fraud Hotline
Ventura County Auditor-Controller
Administration Building L#1540
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

E-Mail *:

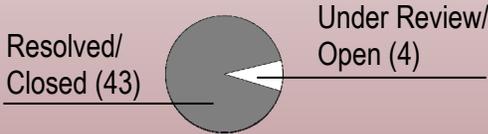
Fraud.Hotline@ventura.org

* E-mail is not confidential



HOTLINE ACTIVITY AT A GLANCE . . . During July through December 2019, the Employee Fraud Hotline received 47 new complaints, of which we pursued 21 (45%). We did not pursue 24 of the new issues because the complainants were redirected to other hotlines or other appropriate agencies, and we did not pursue 2 issues due to insufficient information.

As of December 31, 2019, most of the 47 new issues have been resolved/closed:



During July through December 2019, we resolved/closed 74 out of the 90 total Hotline issues that were under review/open. Specifically, we resolved/closed 43 out of 47 new complaints, and we resolved/closed 31 out of 43 open complaints from prior periods.

Summary Outcomes of 74 Hotline Issues Resolved/Closed during July-December 2019

Table with 2 columns: Outcome and Count. Rows include Substantiated (7), Unsubstantiated (23), Redirected to Other Hotlines/Agencies (24), and Insufficient Information (20).

Most of the new complaints were made by phone:

Contact Method

Table with 2 columns: Contact Method and Percentage. Rows include Phone (58%), Email (19%), U.S. or Interoffice Mail (17%), and In Person (6%).

DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS

- 1. Abusive Use of County Vehicle. A County employee inappropriately parked a County vehicle on a city street during street sweeping hours. The employee has assured future compliance with the local ordinance.
2. Software Purchase Waste. An employee of a County department exercised poor management decision making in approving the department's purchase of software several years ago for \$92,200; the software was not used by the department due to the expertise required in handling the software. The department reported that discipline is being discussed with management.
3. Personal Use of County Property. A County manager allowed two County employees to use County property for personal use. The manager was coached by a senior manager.
4. Abuse of County Vehicle. A County employee inappropriately used a County vehicle to take a lunch break when the employee was not working in the field. Management counseled the employee on appropriate use of County vehicles.

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DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS

5. **Misuse of County Equipment.** Two County employees misused County phones and computers for excessive personal use. Usage will be monitored and the employees have been counseled on the appropriate use of County equipment.
6. **Inappropriate Video.** Employees of a County agency made and posted a video on the agency's social media sites that was perceived by some as demeaning to the agency's clients. The video has been removed from the agency's social media sites, and management has discussed the matter with employees who made the video.
7. **County Email Abuse.** A County employee used the County email system to send an excessive number of personal emails. The employee has been verbally counseled and directed to refrain from using the County email system for personal use in a manner that is inconsistent with County policy.