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Good Government Hotline

Fiscal Year 2012 Report

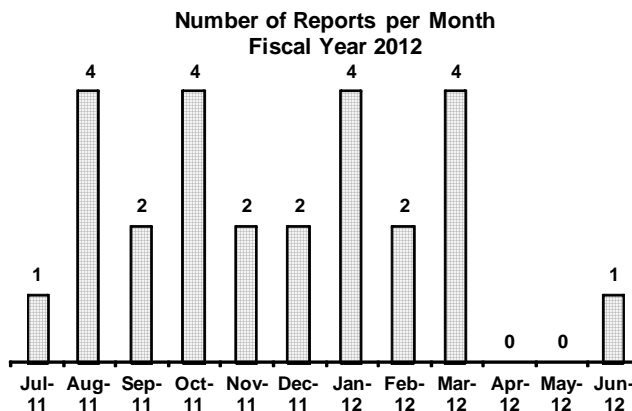
July 2011 – June 2012

General Overview

The Good Government Hotline was established in October 2007 to provide Multnomah County employees and the public at large with a method of reporting suspected fraud, abuse of position, and misuse of county resources (see the general definitions on page 4). In January of 2012, in collaboration with the Office of Diversity and Equity, the Hotline also became a means for Multnomah County employees to report complaints of workplace discrimination or harassment. The Hotline, administered confidentially and securely by an independent company, EthicsPoint, allows citizens to make confidential reports through both a 24/7 call center and over the Internet. Information is gathered and reported to the Multnomah County Auditor's Office or the Office of Diversity and Equity for resolution. Citizens may also contact the Auditor's Office directly.

This report covers Good Government Hotline activities during Fiscal Year 2012 (July 2011 through June 2012) and summarizes overall reports made to the Hotline since its inception in 2007.

Number of Reports FY12



The Hotline received 26 reports during FY12, an average of 2.2 per month. April and May had no activity while August, October, January and March were the busiest months with four reports filed each month.

Administration

From its inception in 2007 through June 2010, the Hotline was administered by EthicsPoint, which offers a 24/7 call center with a live intake person as well as an online reporting option. From July of 2010, through December 2011, the Auditor's Office assumed administration of the Hotline. Reports could be completed on-line or callers could leave a voicemail message on a confidential, dedicated line. In January of 2012, the Auditor's Office, in collaboration with the Office of Diversity and Equity and the Department of Human Resources, renewed a contract with EthicsPoint, to resume administration of the Good Government Hotline. Direct costs associated with the Auditor's Office administration of the Hotline will be approximately \$1,250 per year. Time spent by county staff investigating and responding to reports referred to departments or appropriate officials is not included and varies by the types of reports received. The reason for fluctuation in the number of reports per month is unknown and it is difficult to reasonably predict future usage of the Hotline.

Trends

The Hotline has received 188 reports since its inception in 2007, through June 2012. Activity was greatest during the first several months of operation with 54 reports filed from October 2007 through June 2008. As illustrated in the chart below, 54 reports were filed in FY09, 35 reports in FY10, 19 reports in FY11 (when the Auditor's Office switched from the EthicsPoint Service) and 26 reports in FY12. It is notable that reports from employees dropped significantly in FY10, going from 36 reports in FY08 and 42 reports in FY09, to 18 reports in 2010, after efforts were made to clarify the Hotline was not for regular human resource issues.

It is difficult to determine the reason for fewer total reports in FY11. However, for a period of time the Hotline was not on the County's main web page and during FY11, callers were required to leave a message, rather than talking with an intake specialist. In past years 27% of reports were made through the 24/7 call center, compared to 2 of 19 (11%) reports made by phone in FY11.

In FY12, of 26 total reports, 18 were made online, 5 were received through the 24/7 call center and 3 came in via other sources. One half of all FY12 reports were made by employees, similar to the past two years.

Summary of Annual Statistics

Report Period	Total	Report Type			Source of Call	
		On-line	Call-in	Other	Employee	Public
October 2007 - June 2008	54	42	12	0	36	18
July 2008 - June 2009	54	40	14	0	42	12
July 2009 - June 2010	35	21	12	2	18	17
July 2010 - June 2011	19	15	2	2	9	10
July 2011 - June 2012	26	18	5	3	13	13
Total	188	136	45	7	118	70

Our office has received great value from hearing from employees and the public through the Hotline. In a 2010 Global Fraud Study, the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners reported that fraud in government agencies is more likely to be detected based on a tip than by any other detection method. While there are many ways to receive fraud tips, the hotline provides an effective avenue for reporting.

Overall Statistics for Fiscal Year 2012

7/11 – 6/12 Hotline Report Categories:

Fraud	1
Abuse of Position	1
Conflict of Interest	1
Unauthorized Use of County Property	1
Misuse of Time/Benefits	2
Other HR Related Concern	3
General Workplace Concern	3
Inappropriate Behavior/Actions	5
Improper Contractor Activity	1
Other Citizen Complaint or Concern	1
Not County Related	5
Discrimination or Harassment	2
Total	26

7/11 - 7/12 Reports by Current Disposition Status:

Contacted appropriate official – no further review necessary	6
Referred report to appropriate official for resolution	5
Referred the reporter to a more appropriate resource	6
Reported concern or issue resolved	8
Review suspended due to unavailable information	0
Auditor's review or other investigation ongoing at this time	0
Report incorporated into an audit	1

- 69% of reports were submitted via the Internet.
- 50% of reports came from members of the public.

- 42% of reports were referred to the appropriate official. (i.e. management, HR, County Attorney) for review/resolution.
- 19% of reports were not County related.

- No reports remain unresolved.
- **1 report topic will be incorporated into an audit**

- 4 of 26 (15%) Hotline reports fell in categories that meet the general definitions of fraud, abuse of position, and misuse of county resources, but none were substantiated.
- 13 of 26 (50%) Hotline reports fell in one of these four categories: misuse of time or benefits; other human resources related concern; general workplace concern; or inappropriate behavior/actions.

Overall Statistics for Fiscal Years 2008 – 2012

11/08 – 6/12 Hotline Report Categories:

Fraud	7
Abuse of Position	9
Conflict of Interest	9
Unauthorized Use of County Property	11
Misuse of Time/Benefits	25
Other HR Related Concern	31
General Workplace Concern	25
Inappropriate Behavior/Actions	30
Improper Contractor Activity	11
Other Citizen Complaint or Concern	14
Not County Related	14
Discrimination or Harassment	2
Total	188

7/10 – 6/12 Reports by Current Disposition Status:

Contacted appropriate official – no further review necessary	51
Referred report to appropriate official for resolution	58
Referred the reporter to a more appropriate resource	21
Reported concern or issue resolved	36
Review suspended due to unavailable information	12

- 72% of reports were submitted via the Internet.
- 37% of reports came from members of the public.

- **2 report topics reports will be incorporated into audits in the coming year.**

- 19% of Hotline reports fell in categories that meet the general definitions of fraud, abuse of position, and misuse of county resources, but were not substantiated.
- 59% of Hotline reports fell in one of these four categories: misuse of time or benefits; other human resources related concern; general workplace concern; or inappropriate behavior/actions.
- 58% of reports were handled by departments, either through a review with the appropriate official or referral for resolution.

To date, no criminal charges have resulted from any Hotline report.

APPENDIX

General Definitions

Fraud is defined as the intentional misappropriation of county assets by any act including, but not limited to, theft, embezzlement, or misrepresentation. Fraud can be internal or external, in that it can be perpetrated by contractors or vendors, as well as by county agencies and employees. While none has been discovered as a result of the Hotline, these are the kinds of things we maintain vigilance for.

Examples of fraud:

- Misappropriation of county cash and other funds, including funds intended for service recipients or those incarcerated in county jail facilities
- Theft or unauthorized removal of county records or property or the property of other persons
- Willful destruction or damage of county records, county property, or the property of other persons
- Falsification of records such as time cards or travel and other expense vouchers

Abuse is defined as use of employment with the county to obtain personal gain or benefit from the county to which one is not entitled, for the employee or for someone else, such as a friend or family member. Such actions constitute **abuse of position** and abuse of the public trust.

Examples of abuse of position:

- Obtaining a benefit or service from the county for which an employee does not qualify
- Providing a benefit or service to someone for which they do not qualify
- Unauthorized reduction of fines or fees

Misuse of county resources is defined as using a county resource, such as county equipment or county-compensated time, for personal use.

Examples of misuse of county resources:

- Personal use, unauthorized use, or misuse of county property such as computers, telephones, vehicles, and fax machines
- Performing personal business on county time
- Not working when being paid to work

Discrimination or Harassment is the uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct directed at an employee because of his or her sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, or beliefs.

Accessing the Good Government Hotline

Reporters can access the Hotline in a variety of ways:

- Proceed directly to the County Auditor's reporting page at www.GoodGovHotline.com to submit an online report.
- Call **888-289-6839 (toll free) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**. Reports are taken by a live intake specialist. Calls are not recorded and caller ID is disabled.
- Access the Hotline vendor, EthicsPoint, at this address: www.ethicspoint.com. Follow the "File New Report" link and enter "Multnomah County" to submit an online report.