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Good Government Hotline
2014 Report
July 2013 – December 2014

General Overview

The Multnomah County Auditor's Office established the Good Government Hotline in October 2007 to provide Multnomah County employees and the public with a method of reporting suspected fraud, abuse of position, waste and misuse of County resources. While there are many ways to receive fraud tips, the Hotline provides an effective avenue for reporting. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners reports that fraud in government agencies is more likely to be detected based on a tip than by any other detection method and that organizations with hotlines were more likely to catch fraud by a tip.

The Hotline provides the public and Multnomah County employees a neutral place to voice their concerns regarding Multnomah government departments and agencies. Individuals who report a concern can trust that all Hotline reports are reviewed to determine whether an investigation or referral is appropriate. Concerns outside our jurisdiction may be referred to a more appropriate resource. In some cases a complaint may be the focus of an audit.

The Hotline, administered confidentially and securely by an independent company, EthicsPoint, allows the public and employees to make confidential reports through both a 24/7 call center and online. Information is gathered and reported to the Multnomah County Auditor's Office for resolution. Multnomah County employees and the public may also contact the Auditor's Office directly.

In January 2012, in collaboration with the County's Office of Diversity and Equity, the Hotline also became a means to report complaints of workplace discrimination or harassment. In 2014, the Auditor's Office opened the Hotline to accept complaints directed to the Privacy Officer and the Department of Community Services / Department of Community Justice Ombudsman. These complaints are handled by the respective offices and not included in this report.

In past years the Auditor's Office has reported Hotline Activity on the fiscal year, July 1 through June 30 – 12 months. With this report, we are transitioning from fiscal year reporting to calendar year reporting. Accordingly, this report covers Good Government Hotline activities for the 18-month period July 2013 through December 2014.

Reports Received

The Hotline received 36 reports for the Auditor’s Office during the 18 months spanning July 2013 through December 2014. Of 36 reports received, 20 were made online, 15 came in through the 24/7 call center and one was a report called in directly to the Auditor’s Office. A little over half of all reports were made by members of the public; the remainder made by employees.

Overall, the Auditor’s Office has received 251 complaints since the inception of the Good Government Hotline, October 2007.

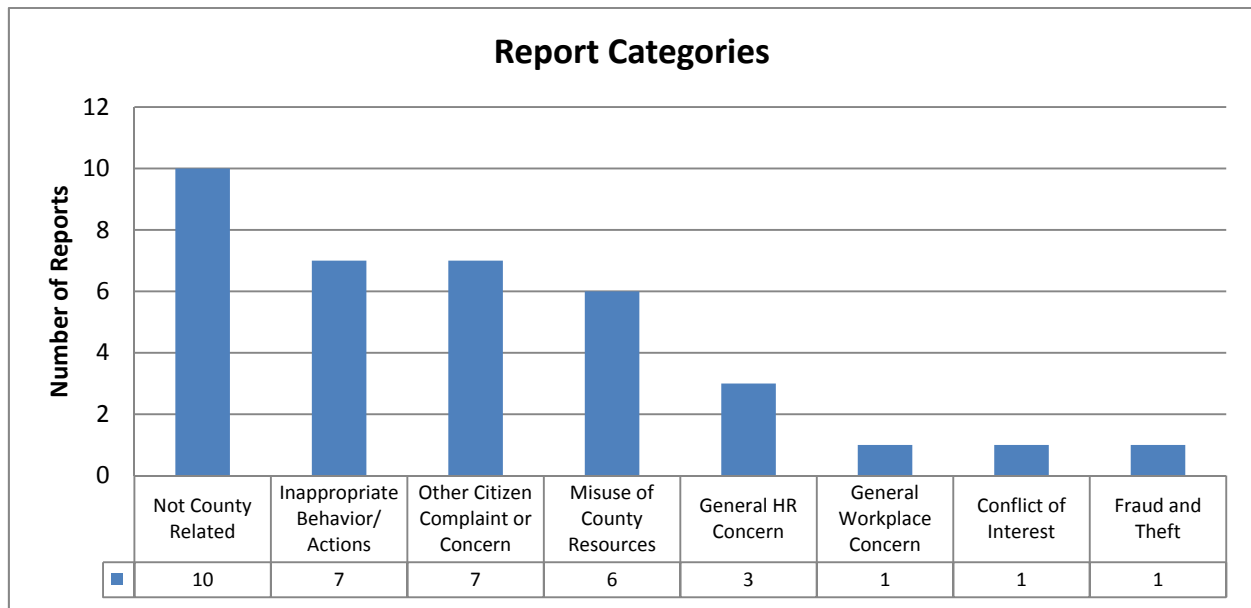
Hotline Reports by Method of Reporting and Source

Report Period	Total	Method of Reporting			Source	
		Online	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
July 2012 – June 2013	27	13	13	1	11	16
July 2013 – December 2014	36	20	15	1	16	20
Total	251	169	73	9	145	106

* Reports may be made online or by phone to the Hotline or by other means, such as email or walk-in to the County Auditor’s Office.

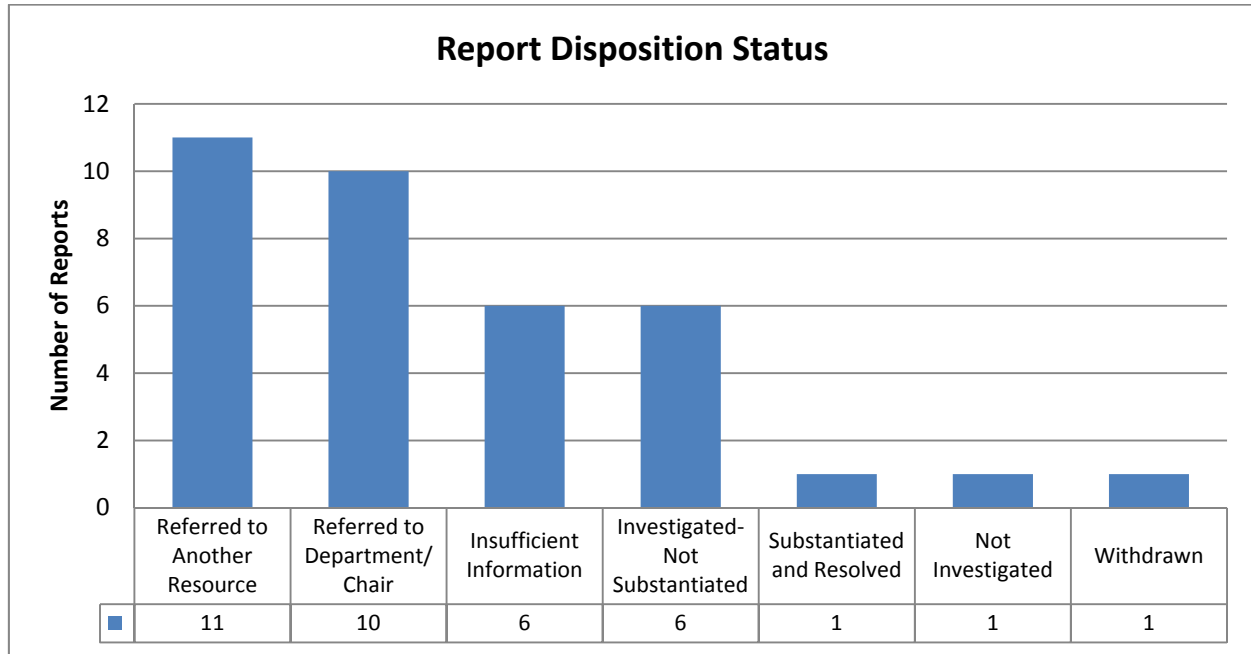
Types of Reports Received July 2013 – December 2014

Reports are categorized as they are received. However, since some reports involve multiple complaint categories, for reporting purposes, we used the category we thought best described each complaint.



- Ten of 36 complaints were not County related. All were referred to a more appropriate resource.

Disposition



- A number of reports were outside our jurisdiction and referred to a more appropriate resource, including to the Portland Police, State Department of Human Services Fraud Investigations Unit, the Oregon Secretary of State Waste Hotline and the State Department of Human Services Ombudsman. Some reports may not be appropriate for investigation, such as those under investigation by another entity or frivolous complaints.

A majority of complaints were resolved within 30 days, with an average of 23 days.

APPENDIX

Administration

From its inception in 2007 through June 2010, the Hotline was administered by EthicsPoint, which offered 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 online or callers could leave a voicemail message on a confidential, dedicated line. In January of 2012, the Auditor’s Office renewed a contract with EthicsPoint, now a part of NAVEX Global, to resume administration of the Good Government Hotline which has provided administration since that time.

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
- 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, unauthorized, or misuse of County property such as computers, cell phones, and vehicles
- 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

People with concerns can access the Hotline in a variety of ways:

- 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 a report” link at the top of the page and enter “Multnomah County” to submit an online report.
- Go directly to the County Auditor’s reporting page at www.GoodGovHotline.com to report online.