

# FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



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Inspector General

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### Website

<http://www.fec.gov/fecig/fecig.shtml>

## THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The FEC's Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established in April 1989 as required by the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988 (5 U.S.C. §2) to detect fraud, waste and abuse in the Commission's programs and examine the efficiency and effectiveness of agency operations. Under the Inspector General Act, the OIG's responsibilities are to:

- Conduct and supervise independent and objective audits, investigations and inspections,
- Review pending legislation and regulations, and
- Keep the Commissioners and Congress fully and currently informed.

Inspector Generals (IGs) are independent. While by law, IGs are under the general supervision of the Commissioners; the Commission cannot prevent or prohibit the IG from conducting an audit or investigation. The IG is authorized to:

- Have direct access to all records and information of the agency,
- Have ready access to the Commission,
- Conduct such audits and investigations and issue reports as the IG believes appropriate (with limited national security and law enforcement exceptions),
- Issue subpoenas for information and documents outside the agency (with the same limited exceptions),
- Administer oaths for taking testimony, and
- Hire and control their own staff and contract resources.

Every six months the OIG prepares a semiannual report to Congress. The report, required by the Act, informs the Commissioners and Congress about the work done by the OIG and any concerns the OIG has with the administration of FEC programs and operations.

## OIG AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS

As required by the Act, the FEC OIG conducts audits, evaluations, inspections and reviews of agency programs and activities. These activities provide an independent evaluation and appraisal of the financial and operating activities to assure integrity, efficiency, and economy of the Commission's programs and activities. Audits are selected based on a number of factors, including (i) statutory requirements, (ii) materiality of the activity, (iii) agency staff comments regarding perceived vulnerabilities or inefficiencies, and (iv) complaints/requests from individuals outside the agency, including Congress, the media, and the public. Final audit reports are provided to the Commission and management officials responsible for implementing the audit recommendations. Final audit reports are public documents and are available on the OIG website.

## OIG INVESTIGATIONS

OIG investigations seek out facts related to allegations of wrongdoing. OIG investigations may address administrative, civil, and criminal violations of laws and regulations. The subject of an OIG investigation can be any agency employee, an FEC contractor, consultant, or a person or entity involved in alleged wrongdoing affecting FEC programs and operations. At the conclusion of an OIG investigation, the OIG prepares a report that sets forth the allegations and an objective description of the facts developed during the investigation.

The OIG refers criminal activity or fraud to the Department of Justice for possible prosecution or recovery of monetary damages and penalties. If administrative misconduct is found, the OIG forwards the report to the appropriate management officials for consideration of disciplinary action. OIG investigative reports are generally not public documents and are not available on the OIG website.

## EMPLOYEE PROTECTIONS

The identity of an FEC employee (complainant) who reports waste or wrongdoing to the OIG will be protected from disclosure. Confidentiality is established by Section 7(b) of the IG Act. The Act precludes the IG from disclosing the identity of an FEC employee who reports an allegation or provides information, without the employee's consent, unless the IG determines that disclosure is unavoidable during the course of the investigation. In addition, the IG Act and the Whistleblower Protection Act (5 U.S.C. § 1221(e)) prohibit reprisals against employees for complaining to or cooperating with the OIG.

The IG takes reasonable precautions to ensure the identity of a complainant is only divulged to those OIG staff who have a need to know such information; this is primarily limited to the IG, Deputy IG, and Counsel to the IG/Chief Investigator who are responsible for responding to and investigating hotline complaints.

The OIG hotline serves as a mechanism for employees and contractors; other government agencies; and the general public to report allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement involving FEC programs, operations, personnel and funds. A person (complainant) may make an allegation anonymously. The OIG does not require that complainants provide their names to report an allegation. However, knowledge of a complainant's identity greatly facilitates the OIG's response to a complaint/allegation by allowing the caller to be contacted and questioned further about the matter or even to act as a witness in later proceedings.

## THE IG COMMUNITY ONLINE

The official website for the IG community is [www.ignet.gov](http://www.ignet.gov). The site provides information such as the history, organization, mission, reports, and activities of the IG community. In addition, IGSNet.gov has a directory of IGs and links to their websites.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The success of the OIG mission depends on the cooperation of all FEC employees. To report any matters involving improper activities at the FEC, we strongly encourage persons who suspect fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement to call, write, e-mail, or visit the OIG. The following constitutes a partial listing of violations of laws or regulations that should be reported:

- Contractors submitting false claims or statements;
- Employee falsification of government records, time cards, travel expense reports and claims for reimbursement of expenditures;
- Misuse of a government computer to access and/or download inappropriate material from the Internet;
- Abuse of government property, such as telephones, copiers, fax machines, postage or computer equipment to conduct church, civic responsibilities, etc.;
- Conversions or abuse of government property to conduct a personal business, such as a travel agency, real estate brokerage or management company, etc.;
- Conflict of interest by federal employees;
- Violation of employee standards of conduct;
- Abuse of authority/power by a supervisor, such as using staff to perform duties that are unrelated to the FEC's mission; and
- Mismanagement or waste of government funds relating to programs and operations.

Agency managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that allegations of wrongdoing they receive are promptly reported to the OIG.

## CONTACTING THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

**Report Suspected Abuse of Authority, Mismanagement, Fraud & Waste:**



**202-694-1015**



**E-mail/fax**  
**[oig@fec.gov](mailto:oig@fec.gov)/202-501-8134**



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