



STATE FRAUD, WASTE & ABUSE HOTLINE

Office of the State Inspector General • Post Office Box 1151 • Richmond, VA 23218 • (804) 625-3255

What is the purpose of the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

The Office of the State Inspector General (OSIG), as authorized by [Executive Order Number 52](#) (2012), operates a toll-free telephone number to encourage state employees and citizens to report situations where fraud, waste or abuse may have occurred in Virginia executive branch agencies and institutions.

The toll-free State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline provides an anonymous and confidential method for state employees and citizens to report suspected fraud, waste, abuse or corruption in state agencies and institutions.

How does someone contact the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

Citizens and state employees may call the Hotline toll-free at (800) 723-1615, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., excluding state holidays. The number is only toll-free in Virginia. In addition, voice mail is available during non-working hours.

Are there other ways to report fraud, waste and abuse?

Yes. There are a number of other ways to report fraud, waste and abuse including:

- By email at COVHotline@osig.virginia.gov
- By web form at [Hotline Web Form](#)
- By mail: State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline, Office of the State Inspector General, PO Box 1151, Richmond, VA 23218
- By FAX: (804) 371-0165

What types of complaints should be reported?

The following instances — occurring in Virginia executive branch agencies and institutions — should be reported:

- Illegal or fraudulent conduct
- Waste of funds
- Abuse of state property or resources
- Gross mismanagement
- Gross neglect of duty

What is considered fraud, waste, or abuse?

Fraud is defined as the intentional deception by an individual (or individuals) or organization(s), which could result in a benefit to themselves, others or the Commonwealth or could cause detriment to others or the Commonwealth. Fraud includes false representation of

fact (whether by words or conduct), making false or misleading statements, or by concealment of something that should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.

Waste is defined as the thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use, or squandering of Commonwealth resources to the detriment (or potential detriment) of the Commonwealth. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs resulting from inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.

Abuse is defined as excessive or improper use of a thing, or to use something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use. Examples include the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of Commonwealth resources; or extravagant or excessive use as to abuse one's position or authority. Abuse can occur in financial or non-financial settings.

Some examples of fraud, waste and abuse include:

- Personal use of state-owned vehicles;
- Personal use of state telephones, including long distance, personal calls;
- Personal use of state owned supplies or equipment;
- Violations of state procurement policy;
- Excessive or unnecessary purchases;
- Falsification of official documents (timesheets, leave reports, travel vouchers, etc.);
- Contract fraud;
- Conducting personal business on statetime;
- Inappropriate expenditures;
- Embezzlement

Who operates the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

OSIG administers the Hotline and coordinates investigations with various state agencies. Upon completion of the investigations, reports are issued to the appropriate authorities.

Why should someone contact the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

When there is fraud, waste or abuse in state government, everyone — taxpayers and state employees alike — pays. Citizens expect an honest, effective and efficient state government. Every state employee has an obligation to

report significant instances of fraud, waste, or abuse to management. However, if an employee is uncomfortable with reporting to management, a call to the Hotline provides a method to report anonymously.

Who can call the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

Any Virginia citizen or state employee may call the Hotline to report significant instances of fraud, waste and abuse in Virginia executive branch agencies and institutions.

When should citizens call the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

Citizens are encouraged to call the Hotline when they observe fraud, waste, or abuse in executive branch agencies and institutions. Employees should call the Hotline when the employee first learns of the fraud, waste, or abuse.

Keep in mind, the longer it has been from the incident and the time it is reported, the more difficult it becomes to investigate.

What happens when someone calls the State Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline?

When someone calls the Hotline, the caller will be told not to identify himself or herself. The caller then will be transferred to an investigator who will assign a Hotline case number. The investigator will listen to the allegation and ask pertinent questions about it.

Three weeks after the initial call to the Hotline, the caller — with the assigned Hotline case number — should call the Hotline number during regular business hours to provide additional information or to inquire about the status of the case.

The information a caller provides goes through a screening process to determine if it is sufficient and significant enough to conduct an effective investigation. The more information a caller provides, the more effective the investigation.

A Hotline caller should have the following information available when contacting the Hotline:

- Circumstances of the incident
- The agency and the subject(s) involved
- Identify any evidence that is available
- Identify any available documentation and location
- Dates, times, names, places
- Credible witnesses
- In essence, the who, what, when, where, why, how and how often factual information

How are callers protected?

A caller will never be asked to provide his or her name when calling the Hotline, nor is the call traceable. There should never be an attempt on anyone's part to try to identify the caller.

If someone is suspected of calling the Hotline, or if the caller is discovered, retaliation is prohibited. Retaliation against anyone for calling the Hotline can also be reported through the grievance process.

What shouldn't be reported?

The Hotline does not accept calls of allegations that involve the legislative branch, the judicial branch, personnel issues or disciplinary actions within state government, localities, or private businesses. The caller will be referred to the appropriate agency for those calls.

Who can investigate cases?

OSIG staff, agency internal auditors, or other appropriate investigative personnel may conduct investigations that come through the Hotline. Once an investigation is undertaken and it has been determined that a reasonable possibility exists that a significant fraud has occurred, the Code of Virginia § [2.2-309](#)[6] requires that the appropriate Commonwealth Attorney and law-enforcement agencies be notified.

What happens when an investigation is conducted?

When the information provided by the caller passes the screening process, a thorough investigation is conducted. If the allegation of fraud, waste, or abuse is substantiated, a report is issued and corrective action is recommended to rectify the cause or control weaknesses that allowed it to occur.

Executive branch agency management is required to take corrective action on all recommendations to improve controls over situations where fraud, waste, or abuse has occurred.

What happens when an investigation is completed?

OSIG investigative reports are not published on the OSIG website due to the sensitive nature of investigative reports. Redacted copies of reports may be released upon request.

What if a caller is out of state?

The toll-free number for the Hotline works only for in-state callers. Out-of-state callers should call OSIG at (804) 625-3278.

Need more information?

If you would like more information about the Hotline, please contact OSIG at (804) 418-4842.