

Summary of Closed Employee Integrity Cases

Fiscal Year 2017

Oct 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017

EPA Employee Removed for Payroll Fraud

On January 27, 2017, a GS-13 employee was terminated from the EPA for fraudulently receiving payroll funds in excess of what was appropriate. The employee, who was assigned to an EPA office in California, was authorized to telework full-time due to a reasonable accommodation agreement. Management discovered that the employee had moved out of state and was believed to have been teleworking from the new location for several months while still receiving the higher locality pay associated with the California office. The employee was overpaid approximately \$12,000. The EPA is pursuing collection of these funds.

EPA Employee Terminated for Personnel Violations

On December 9, 2016, a GS-12 employee was terminated from the EPA for violating a warning letter and for not working days that the employee recorded as worked in the official EPA timekeeping system. The employee had been issued a warning letter in 2014 after making false, malicious, or unfounded statements against co-workers and government officials. Evidence was found showing that the employee violated the warning letter. Further, while the employee worked from home full-time under a reasonable accommodation agreement for a medical condition, the investigation disclosed that the employee was frequently absent from the approved telework location. In addition, the person was found to be in violation of the medical telework agreement. The employee was terminated from the EPA for conduct unbecoming a federal employee and failure to follow instructions.

EPA Employee Resigns from Agency, Pleads Guilty to Theft

On November 4, 2016, an EPA GS-8 employee resigned from federal service, and on December 20, 2016, pleaded guilty to theft in state court stemming from theft from an employee association. The EPA employee, who was a co-president of an EPA regional employee association, confessed to stealing \$424 in cash entrusted to the position and using the funds for personal gain. The employee also confessed to shredding \$488 in checks associated with the same fundraiser instead of depositing them into the employee association account. In September 2016, the employee was placed on indefinite suspension without pay, pending the outcome of the criminal investigation and associated judicial proceedings. The employee was sentenced by the district court to 6 months of probation, a \$250 fine, and \$424 in restitution.

EPA Employee Retires After Time-and-Attendance Violations

On October 28, 2016, an EPA GS-9 employee retired from federal service while administrative action was pending, due to investigative findings that the employee falsified time-and-attendance records for a

year and a half. The EPA had been in the process of preparing a letter to the employee proposing a 30-day suspension, based on 177 hours of inaccurate reporting, including 115 hours of absences without leave and 37 instances of failing to follow leave procedures. The former employee was issued a debt letter for overpayment of \$6,822, and the EPA is pursuing collection of the funds.

EPA Employee Suspended for Lack of Disclosure

On December 2, 2016, an EPA GS-11 employee received a 3-day suspension for lack of candor after it was found that the employee did not properly disclose a prior criminal offense. As part of a background investigation, documentation showed that the employee had been indicted in 2010 on two felony counts of witness tampering. In 2011, the employee was convicted and sentenced to 2 years' confinement (suspended sentence) and 5 years' probation and ordered to pay a \$1,500 fine. The investigation determined that the employee was not truthful in completing the SF-85P, Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions, since prior indictment was not disclosed.

April 1, 2017 – Sept 30, 2017

Debt-Collection Notice Issued

On June 2, 2017, a debt-collection notice was issued to a former EPA Senior Executive Service-level employee for \$21,287. While employed at the EPA, the employee incurred excessive international roaming charges on an EPA-issued mobile device while on personal overseas trips. The investigation found that the employee did not disclose all foreign travel and foreign activities on the Standard Form 86, Questionnaire for National Security Positions, that was submitted, and the employee claimed regular work hours while on vacation in, or in transit to, foreign destinations. On April 2, 2014, the case was presented to the Assistant U.S. Attorney for prosecution. On April 3, 2014, the Department of Justice's Fraud and Public Corruption Section declined to prosecute for the circumstances relating to the conduct. The employee resigned before administrative action could be taken.