



# Illinois Ethics Matters

December 23, 2020

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*Honesty, Integrity, Service*

A newsletter from the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies  
of the Illinois Governor

## Office of Executive Inspector General

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Projects*

**Angela Luning**  
*Deputy Inspector  
General & Acting  
Chief of Springfield  
Division*

**Claudia P. Ortega**  
*Chief Administrative  
Officer*

**Chicago Office:**  
69 W. Washington St.  
Suite 3400  
Chicago, IL 60602  
(312) 814-5600

**Springfield Office:**  
607 E. Adams St.  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, IL 62701  
(217) 558-5600

**Hotline:**  
(866) 814-1113

**TTY:**  
(888) 261-2734

## Recent News

- The OEIG recently released its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2020. The report highlights all the OEIG's work on investigations, hiring and employment monitoring, revolving door determinations, and training, and how the OEIG has adapted and responded during the COVID-19 pandemic. This annual report, as well as annual reports for prior fiscal years, can be found on the OEIG's website [here](#).

## Reminder

- As 2020 closes, ethics officers should confirm that agency employees have completed their approved programs for ethics training and harassment and discrimination prevention training. Each ultimate jurisdiction authority, such as the Governor's Office, must report to the Executive Ethics Commission on the administering of 2020 training programs by February 1, 2021.

## Recently Released OEIG Investigations

Two recently released OEIG investigative reports reveal misconduct that occurred outside the traditional office workplace. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when many employees are working remotely, these reports serve as a reminder to State employees of their duties and obligations.

One investigation found that an Illinois Department of Agriculture employee failed to accurately and truthfully account for her time on State business, and spent State time and resources on a private venture, an animal rescue farm. The employee's primary duties involved field work on controlling gypsy moths. As stated in the report: "The OEIG acknowledges that remote work—whether from the field or from home—presents challenges to State workers. However, at a bare minimum, State employees should be able to provide accurate information of their activities while working from home or in the field, so as to maintain the public trust." The full report, [In re: Nancy Johnson \(Case #18-02624\)](#), can be found on the OEIG website.

Another investigation revealed that an Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) employee initiated a romantic relationship with an IDES client. IDES did not have a policy directing employees to refrain from socializing or engaging in romantic relationships with clients receiving IDES services. Nonetheless, because of the inherent power imbalance between State employees and the clients they serve, the OEIG concluded that the IDES's employee's actions in initiating the romantic relationship, and pursuing that relationship, given the fact that she was an IDES client, constituted unprofessional behavior that reflected unfavorably upon the State, and violated the IDES and Illinois Codes of Personal Conduct. The IDES employee received a 7-day suspension as a result of the investigation. A copy of this report, [In re: Charley Holstein \(Case #18-01896\)](#), can also be found on the OEIG's website.