



# Illinois Ethics Matters

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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

**Ricardo Meza**  
Executive  
Inspector General

**Cole S. Kain**  
Chief of Staff &  
General Counsel

**Erin K. Bonales**  
Deputy Inspector General  
& Chief of Chicago  
Division

**Neil P. Olson**  
Deputy Inspector General  
& Chief of Springfield  
Division

**James J. Bonk**  
Deputy Inspector General  
& Chief of Regional  
Transit Board Division

**Rochelle Hardy**  
Chief Financial &  
Compliance Officer

**David Keahl**  
Director of Ethics  
Training & Compliance

**Wendy Washington**  
Director of Human  
Resources

**Chicago Office:**  
32 W. Randolph Street  
Suite 1900  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 814-5600

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

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

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

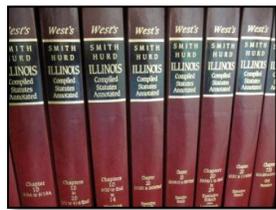
## Recent News

On January 30, 2013, three OEIG investigative reports were publicly released:

- **In re: Salvador Godinez and Jerry Buscher**, 11-01738, involved hiring violations relating to the Illinois Department of Corrections.
- **In re: Margarita Lopez**, 09-00681, involved a DHS employee who fraudulently approved state benefits for her own relatives, among others. She was subsequently charged and found guilty of various criminal violations. Ms. Lopez was also ordered to pay restitution and discharged.
- **In re: Curtis Thompson**, 12-00407, involved a CMS employee who improperly requested leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act. Mr. Thompson was discharged.

Please visit the OEIG's website to view these cases and the site's new link to information concerning the OEIG's Grant Initiative Review Team (GRIT).

## Rep. Crespo Reintroduces Two Ethics Bills



On January 25, 2013, State Representative Fred Crespo (44<sup>th</sup> District) reintroduced two bills intended to promote ethics and transparency in state

government.

House Bill 970 would allow an executive inspector general to publicly disclose founded summary reports in certain instances when the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) elects not to do so. Present law mandates the EEC's public release of founded summary reports only in instances where a state employee is terminated or suspended for three or more days.

"We continue to support efforts to increase transparency and we believe doing so discourages future wrongdoing." – **Ricardo Meza**

House Bill 971 would set a minimum fine of \$250 for the failure of a state employee to complete mandatory ethics training. This proposed legislation would promote timely and efficient employee compliance with ethics training requirements.

We support these bills, which will advance ethical conduct by state employees and officials, and we encourage others to support both of them.

**Cole S. Kain**  
Chief of Staff & General Counsel

## Executive Ethics Commissioner Fined \$2,500 for Violating Ethics Act

On January 29, 2013, the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) made public its decision in **Meza v. Thurston**, 13-EEC-005, a matter involving former EEC commissioner **Rev. Stephen Thurston**.

To better ensure impartiality, the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act includes provisions that apply specifically to EEC employees and commissioners, among others. These select individuals are thereby limited with respect to their involvement in political activities.

The EEC determined that Rev. Thurston violated the Ethics Act when, on March 25, 2011, during his term as an EEC commissioner, he engaged in proscribed political activity.

"In this case, the \$2,500 fine imposed upon Rev. Stephen Thurston was wholly appropriate under the circumstances."

– **Asst. IG Tiffany Stedman**

Any state employee with questions concerning these or other restrictions under the Ethics Act should contact his or her ethics officer.

**Erin K. Bonales**  
Deputy Inspector General & Chief of  
Chicago Division

**Calendar of Events:** February 19, 2013: two OEIG investigators will attend Auditing for Fraud in the Government Environment training in Springfield, IL; February 21 - 22, 2013: OEIG Grant Review Initiative Team members will attend grant review training in Springfield, IL; February 25 - March 1, 2013: eight OEIG investigators will attend Association of Inspectors General Certified Inspector General Investigator training in Austin, TX and IT Supervisor Reinke will attend Fundamentals of Windows Server 2008 training in Springfield, IL; and March 5, 2013: Special Counsel Daniel Hurtado will participate in a presentation concerning the Ethics Act's revolving door prohibition at the EEC's annual ethics officer conference in Springfield, IL.