



Illinois Ethics Matters

February 20, 2020

www.inspectorgeneral.illinois.gov

Honesty, Integrity, Service

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

Office of Executive Inspector General

Susan M. Haling
Executive Inspector
General

Neil P. Olson
General Counsel

Fallon Opperman
Deputy Inspector
General & Chief of
Chicago Division

Erin K. Bonales
Director, Hiring &
Employment
Monitoring Division

Christine Benavente
Deputy Inspector
General-Executive
Projects

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.
14th Floor
Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 558-5600

Hotline:
(866) 814-1113

TTY:
(888) 261-2734

Recent News

- On February 6, 2020, Executive Inspector General Susan Haling testified before the Joint Commission on Ethics and Lobbying Reform and described the OEIG's investigative procedures as well as potential amendments to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

HEM's Continued Efforts Advancing State Hiring Reform

Among the OEIG's duties listed in the Ethics Act is "[t]o review hiring and employment files of each State agency within the Executive Inspector General's jurisdiction to ensure compliance with *Rutan v. Republican Party of Illinois*, 497 U.S. 62 (1990), and with all applicable employment laws." In 2015, the OEIG established a separate division known as the Hiring & Employment Monitoring Division (HEM) to focus solely on compliance reviews of State hiring.

HEM, in part, works with the Special Master in the *Shakman* litigation, to help ensure the State reaches compliance with the 1972 decree. HEM played a large role in the creation of an inclusive exempt position list, which was initially posted in January 2019 and is the first of its kind in State history. HEM reviews every position proposed to be added to the list, and every appointment to an exempt position to ensure the candidate is minimally qualified.

HEM also conducts its own independent monitoring of State hiring and assisted in the creation of the Comprehensive Employment Plan (CEP) unveiled by the State in November 2019. The plan includes general principles and commitments to ensure the integrity of the State hiring process, including that employment actions will be free from political influence, position descriptions will be accurate and fully updated, and potential conflicts of interest will be disclosed. The CEP also includes the blueprint for the non-exempt position hiring process, such as establishing a hiring plan, a minimum job posting period of 10 days, creating hiring criteria and testing requirements ahead of a posting, a suggested minimum interview pool of 10 applicants, and consistent and independent interview and evaluation procedures. Of note, a State employee who becomes aware of a violation of the CEP, a "political contact" trying to influence a non-exempt hire, political discrimination, or any employment hiring error must report the matter to the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) Compliance Officer and HEM within 48 hours.

As part of its monitoring duties, HEM has begun to issue written advisories to State agency leadership and CMS to identify issues and make recommendations regarding hiring processes. The advisories include: a summary of the reviewed hiring process; conclusions on compliance with the CEP; and recommendations aimed at ensuring the integrity of the State's hiring systems and decisions.

HEM and CMS recently met with agency personnel officers to brief them about their duties under the CEP. A copy of the [CEP](#) is available on the OEIG website.