



# 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

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## Employee Benefit Funds at IDOC

An OEIG investigation relating to the administration of Employee Benefit Funds (EBFs) at the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) was recently released. EBFs exist at all of the IDOC Correctional Centers and at its central administrative office in Springfield. Although EBFs serve a purpose in boosting employee morale, the EBFs at each facility operated independently, with little to no oversight, whether through audits, implementation of clear policies and procedures, training, or otherwise.

The investigation revealed that although IDOC's Administrative Directives limited the primary source of the EBFs' revenues to profits from vending machines and employee commissaries, most of the EBFs had expanded their revenue streams by generating large sums of money from fundraising. These expansive fundraising efforts, in turn, led to various problematic practices, such as soliciting donations from local businesses without ensuring that they were not State vendors, improperly holding raffles, selling merchandise in a way that evaded statutory and IDOC limitations, and devoting large amounts of State time to EBF activities. In addition, the investigation discovered that the EBFs spent much of the funds they raised on employee entertainment; in some cases they spent their funds in ways that benefitted only a select few employees. The EBFs also improperly used inmate labor for their fundraisers.

In response to the report, and at the direction of the prior and current gubernatorial administrations, IDOC undertook an extensive review and overhaul of EBF procedures. A senior IDOC employee was also suspended for 15 days. A copy of the report, *In re: John Baldwin and Edwin Bowen (OEIG Case #17-01266)*, is available on the OEIG website.

## HEM Annual Report

The OEIG released its second Annual Hiring & Employment Monitoring (HEM) Report this month. The report details the OEIG's investigative and compliance work as it relates to State hiring and employment for the calendar year 2021.

This year, HEM issued 61 Advisories that reviewed hiring processes and made recommendations to agencies. HEM monitored 22 hiring sequences, completed 37 desk audits, and reviewed 334 exempt appointment notifications. Among other work, HEM also reviewed 19 term appointments, completing a review of approximately 232 term appointment renewals – a review that spanned four years.

The report also highlights the significant hiring-related improvements that occurred in 2021. During the fourth quarter, HEM issued three Progress Reviews that provided an in-depth analysis of the State's progress in specific areas of hiring reform. The report is available on the OEIG's website [here](#).

## Political Contact Reporting Reminder

State employees are reminded to report any political contact relating to any employment action to CMS or the OEIG within 48 hours. All unsolicited contacts related to hiring or employment actions for non-exempt positions from or on behalf of any appointed or elected official or political party must be reported. State employees can report political contacts to CMS:

<https://ilgov.sharepoint.com/sites/CMSPoliticalContactReporting>  
or directly to the OEIG:  
<https://www2.illinois.gov/oeig/complaints/Pages/FileaComplaint.aspx>