



As of 7/28/2017

Office of Public Accountability Standard Operating Procedures

Investigative Hotline Tips/Citizen Concerns

Purpose:

To create a general process of how the Office of Public Accountability (OPA) will address hotline tips and/or citizen concerns.

Responsible Person(s):

Public Auditor (PA)

Investigative Committee composed of a minimum three (3) OPA Auditors

Overview:

OPA has a hotline that provides a confidential way for citizens and government employees to share their concerns and report improper government activities, such as Illegal acts (such as corruption, bribery, theft, or fraud); Misuse or abuse of government property or time; and Gross misconduct, incompetence, or inefficiency.

Information received on the Hotline helps OPA assess risks and determine where to focus OPA's limited resources. All information provided to OPA is held in the strictest confidence. Disclosing privileged communication or information violates 1 GCA §1909.1 as a felony of the third degree.

Individuals can submit a hotline tip or express a concern through several ways:

- 1.) Calling 47AUDIT (472-8348);
- 2.) Visiting www.opaguam.org;
- 3.) Faxing sufficient and relevant information to 472-7951; or
- 4.) Contacting any of the OPA staff by phone at 475-0390 or in person.

All hotline tips and citizen concerns should be filed in the hotline database, which is password protected and located in the Investigative Server. Access to the hotline database and the Investigative Server is limited to the Investigative Committee, the Public Auditor, and any other OPA employee authorized by the Public Auditor.

General Procedures for Investigative Committee:

1. Whenever a hotline tip or citizen concern is received, it must first get logged into the hotline database.
2. For hotline tips or citizen concerns received in person, it is recommended to have a minimum of two Investigative Committee members present.
3. Most individuals that submit hotline tips or citizen concerns will want to remain anonymous. However, for those hotline tips or citizen concerns received where an email or contact number is identified, the Investigative Committee should contact the individual via email or telephone to confirm receipt and ask for any further information or clarification as soon as possible, no later than two weeks.

4. The Investigative Committee should exercise professional judgement in deciding the credibility of hotline tips and citizens' concerns. They should consider the amount of information provided, and whether there are similar hotline tips or citizen concerns previously received.
5. The Investigative Committee should meet monthly to discuss hotline tips and citizen concerns received, and what actions (if any) would be recommended to address it or close it.
6. The Investigative Committee should review the hotline tips and citizen concerns regularly and make a determination as to the disposition (i.e. Closed, In Process, Pending, etc.) and reasoning for the disposition.
7. The Investigative Committee should provide the Public Auditor an update on the hotline tips or citizen concerns received quarterly. However, for more credible and urgent hotline tips or citizen concerns, they should bring it to the Public Auditor's attention immediately.
8. Ultimately it is the Public Auditor's decision on what actions (if any) should be taken to address or close the hotline tip or citizen concern.
9. OPA Auditors will inquire of hotline tips or citizen concerns related to their audit entity or subject. The request should be made through email, and the Investigative Committee should respond and provide the requested information within a week.

General Procedures for OPA Auditors not on the Investigative Committee:

1. For hotline tips or citizen concerns received via direct telephone line or email, OPA employees can either forward the information via email to the Investigative Committee or input the information via the OPA hotline on the website, which gets sent to the Investigative Committee.
2. For hotline tips or citizen concerns received in person, it is recommended to refer the individual to the Investigative Committee, who will meet with them. However, if the individual reporting the hotline tip or citizen concern still prefers to meet with the OPA employee, then it is recommended to have at least one member of the Investigative Committee present.
3. OPA Auditors should inquire of hotline tips and citizen concerns related to their audit entity or subject, and they must be made through email to the Investigative Committee.

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