



2018 Innovation Award Winner



City and County of San Francisco – Fraud Hotline Outreach and Education Program

“We value innovation and continuous improvement as a way to ensure the integrity of local government.” – Steve Flaherty, Principal Auditor, City and County of San Francisco

The City and County’s Office of the Controller maintains a Whistleblower Program to field complaints from City and County employees, suppliers, contractors, grant recipients and members of the public. The City and County Controller serves as the chief auditor for the City and County and is responsible for maintaining the internal control environment. The Controller’s Office uses the information from the Whistleblower Program to assist in its risk assessment and the development of its audit plan.

In order for the Controller’s Office to receive useful complaints, users of the Whistleblower Program need to understand the types of information to report. The Controller’s Office implemented the Fraud Hotline

Outreach and Education Program to provide information to the individuals who are most likely to submit a complaint.

The Controller's Office developed a variety of materials to educate its audience, including one-page guides, videos and webinars. The one-page guides raise awareness of red flags associated with common occupational fraud schemes such as bid rigging, misuse of grant funds, and inventory theft. Below are some examples of the one-page guides that the Controller's Office has circulated:

- Bid Rigging Flyer
- Grant Fraud Flyer
- Inventory Theft Flyer
- Mischaracterized Expenses Flyer

The videos and webinars provide in-depth content and training on specific fraud topics. Below is a sample of videos and instructional materials:

- Whistleblower Program Outreach Video
- Fraud in the Government Webinar
- Department Liaison Training

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The goal of the Fraud Hotline Outreach and Education Program was to educate its users so that they would be more comfortable in making complaints and providing information on improprieties that are reportable events. The materials listed above have helped to minimize reports that do not involve wrongdoing or lack sufficient information for follow-up. As a result, the Controller's Office helped increase the percentage of complaints closed from 31 percent in fiscal year 2013-14 to 41 percent in fiscal year 2016-17.

For more information, please contact Steve Flaherty by phone at (415) 554-7657 or by e-mail at steve.flaherty@sfgov.org.

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