



Illinois Ethics Matters

February 2, 2017

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

Margaret A. Hickey
Executive Inspector General

Susan Haling
First Assistant Inspector General

Daniel Hurtado
General Counsel

Fallon Opperman
Deputy Inspector General & Chief of Chicago Division

Thomas Klein
Deputy Inspector General & Chief of Springfield Division

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:
Phone: (866) 814-1113

TTY:
(888) 261-2734

Recent News

- The OEIG is pleased to announce that **M. Benjamin Keener** and **Meghan J. Nordstrom** began as Investigative Interns in, respectively, the Springfield and Chicago offices.

State Employees Fined \$1,000 by EEC for Lying to OEIG



The State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (Ethics Act) requires that all State employees under the OEIG’s jurisdiction co-operate with the OEIG. Failure to cooperate, which includes lying during an OEIG interview, can result in

fines of up to \$5,000.

The Executive Ethics Commission issued two separate disciplinary decisions finding that the employee in each case violated the Ethics Act by failing to cooperate with an OEIG investigation. The failure to cooperate in both cases was based on the employees’ false statements during their interviews with the OEIG. The false statements included denials of their wrongdoing.

- In ***Hickey v. Schweitzer (17 EEC 001)***, the EEC agreed with the OEIG that a former Department of Employment Security (IDES) employee had made false statements to OEIG investigators.
- In ***Hickey v. Spresser (17 EEC 002)***, the EEC agreed with the OEIG that a former Department of Natural Resources (DNR) employee had made false statements to OEIG investigators.

Mr. Schweitzer and Mr. Spresser both resigned after the OEIG issued final reports regarding those investigations. In addition, the EEC levied fines of \$1,000 against each former employee for non-cooperation. Copies of the EEC decisions are on the OEIG website.

OEIG Finds Rutan Violation in IDOT Promotion

The OEIG received allegations of hiring improprieties at IDOT. The State’s *Rutan* rules, named after the Supreme Court political hiring case, *Rutan v. Republican Party*, affirm that no “interview panel should include, either as interviewers or as technical advisors, any person who is related to, or otherwise would have a conflict of interest in connection with evaluating, any of the applicants for the position.”

The OEIG determined an IDOT interviewer’s connection to the applicant through political events created a conflict of interest that should have disqualified her from participating in the interview. Special Master Noelle Brennan separately reviewed this hiring and determined that the interviewer was a subordinate of the applicant and so should not have been in the interview.

During the course of the investigation, the selected applicant returned to his previous position. Following the findings of the OEIG and the Special Master, IDOT discharged the interviewer. The OEIG report, ***In re: Shevlin (Case #15-00238)*** is available on the OEIG website.