



# 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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## Recent News

On October 23, 2013, the Illinois Senate confirmed the reappointment of **Executive Inspector General Ricardo Meza**. Mr. Meza's new five-year term extends to June 30, 2018.

In addition, on October 23, 2013, an OEIG investigative report was publicly disclosed:

- **In re: Denise Cobb**, 12-00039, involved a CTA employee who violated CTA policy. Ms. Cobb was discharged prior to issuance of the investigative report.

In other news, the OEIG is pleased to announce:

- **David Keahl** has been appointed deputy chief of staff and continues to serve as director of ethics training and compliance; and
- **Steven Hochstetler** and **Kevin McKanna** have begun employment in the OEIG's Chicago office as investigators with the general investigations staff.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ethics Act



December 9, 2013 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. Among other things, the Ethics Act established an independent OEIG with jurisdiction to investigate allegations of wrongdoing by public officials and employees, and others doing business with them.

Our independence is apparent in the more than 80 of our investigative reports that have been publicly disclosed since a 2009 Ethics Act amendment permitted publication of our founded reports in certain circumstances.

In the past 10 years, our agency has grown from 19 employees working primarily out of a Chicago office, to nearly 80 employees based in Chicago and Springfield. In addition, amendments to the Ethics Act have improved our effectiveness by:

- permitting us to accept anonymous complaints;
- granting us authority to initiate investigations;
- assigning us responsibility to monitor public employee hiring practices; and
- authorizing us to make revolving door employment determinations.

We look forward to the next ten years and remain dedicated to serving Illinois citizens.

**Cole Kain**  
Chief of Staff & General Counsel

## DCFS Investigation—UPDATE

On October 17, 2011, an OEIG/DCFS-OIG Final Summary Investigative Report involving Dr. George Smith was publicly released. The investigation revealed large-scale fraud involving millions in grant funds that various state agencies, including DCFS, DHS and DCEO, awarded to entities Dr. Smith controlled, including DBCC Organization.

On September 28, 2012, DBCC filed for federal bankruptcy protection. The Office of the Illinois Attorney General represents DCFS and other state agencies in bankruptcy court.

On **November 19, 2013**, United States Bankruptcy Judge Pamela Hollis granted the attorney general's motion on behalf of DCFS and other creditors for relief from the automatic stay provisions of the Bankruptcy Code. Judge Hollis's order allows the state creditors to "proceed by whatever means they deem appropriate to adjudicate and liquidate in State court their claims involving the Debtor in these chapter 7 proceedings and others, if any."

The OEIG will continue to monitor the state's efforts to recover grants funds.

**Erin Bonales**  
Deputy Inspector General &  
Chief of Chicago Division

**Calendar of Events:** *November 21, 2013:* Investigators M. Marshall and R. Spears will be attending Leadership and Influence training in Chicago, IL; *November 25, 2013:* Acct. Specialist S. Varadaraj will attend Excel 2007 training in Chicago, IL; and *December 9, 2013:* EIG Meza will attend the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform's reception commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act in Chicago, IL.