



# Office of Inspector General

Investigations



## AmeriCorps State and National 2015 Symposium



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE** 

# Purpose

- Understand the mission of the OIG
- Learn to prevent and detect problems commonly found in AmeriCorps programs
- The preliminary investigative process
- Whistleblower Protection Act
- Know how to contact the OIG

# OIG Mission: Oversight

- Improve efficiency and effectiveness of CNCS programs and operations
  - Prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse
- by:
- Conducting audits, evaluations, and investigations
  - Review policies and make recommendations
  - Keeping the Corporation's CEO and Congress informed

# OIG INDEPENDENCE

- By law, OIG is independent of CNCS
- We report to Congress
- Funded by a separate appropriation
- OIG personnel must remain objective at all times in conducting our work and must be free of personal or organizational conflicts of interest with grantees

# WHAT THE OIG DOES NOT DO

Manage or Direct Agency Programs  
or Operations

# QUESTION

How important is the AmeriCorps program in your community?

# Common Investigations

- Embezzlement
- Displacement
- Improper use of AmeriCorps members
- Misuse of grant funds
- Timesheet fraud

# FRAUD DEFINED

- An intentional distortion of the truth in an attempt to obtain something of value; does not have to result in monetary loss
- ***Layman's terms:***  
Lying, cheating, or stealing

# EMBEZZLEMENT

## Indicators

- Members and staff are not being paid
- Payments are made to “ghost members”
- Frequent use of white out, changes, or additions
- Missing documents or fabricated receipts

# DISPLACEMENT

- Members assigned to staff positions
- Staff laid off and replaced by members
- Employee on leave; member assigned the work
- Employee resigns; member assigned the work

# IMPROPER USE OF MEMBERS

- Members used as personal assistant
- Members not performing service
- Members serving outside the scope of the grant
- Members used to generate business for non-profit

# MISUSE OF GRANT FUNDS

- Grant funds are fully expended early
- Unauthorized costs are charged to the grant
- Funds are borrowed temporarily to pay for unauthorized activities
- Funds are drawn down on unfilled member slots
- Funds are drawn down on terminated members
- Employee claimed under the grant but not working on the grant

# TIMESHEET FRAUD

- Recording hours not actually served
- Service hours are not properly documented
- Member hours are not reasonable or allowable
- Member hours or service not verified
- Timesheets pre-dated or completed in advance
- Members serving from home
- Staff time inaccurately allocated

# THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

- Complaints:
  - Telephone, email, or walk-in
- Determine type of complaint/allegation
- Evaluate complaint and credibility
- Initiate preliminary investigation (or)
- Refer to CNCS or State Service Commission

# COMPLAINT

- A complaint can be initiated by anyone
- Federal funds effected by a fraud may be investigated by the OIG
- Grantees are required to report any allegations or suspicions of fraud
- The OIG determines if an investigation is warranted

# PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

- Determine if:
  - Criminal or administrative investigation
- Conduct a background check on grantee and/or individual
- If necessary, the OIG will contact CNCS or commission to obtain:
  - Recent monitoring visits and results, and
  - Past performance history
- Grantee Notification

# Enhanced Whistleblower Protection

Whistleblower protection now extends to employees of contractors, subcontractors and grantees who disclose information related to:

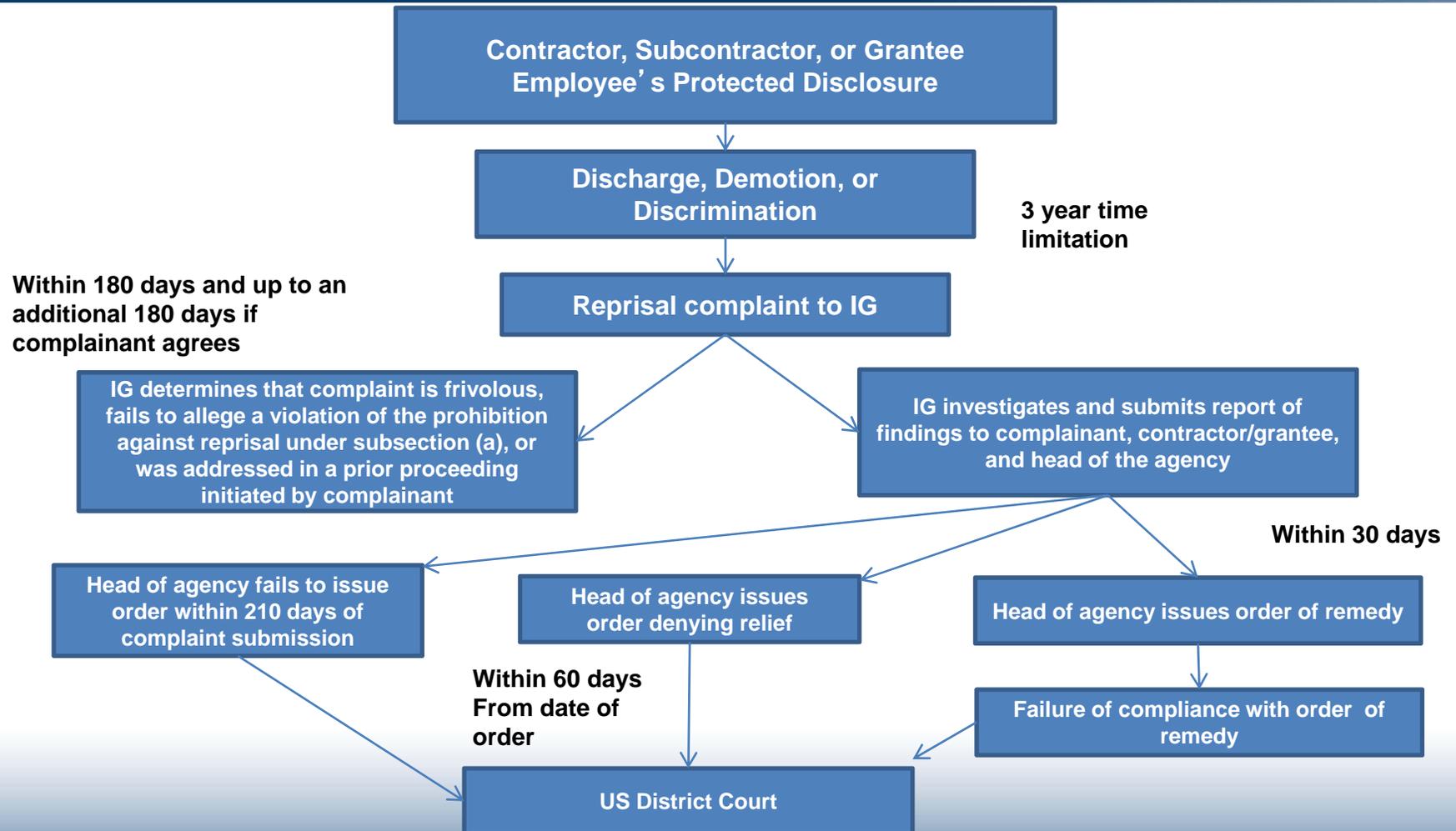
- Gross mismanagement of a Federal contract or grant
- Waste of Federal funds
- Abuse of authority relating to a Federal contract or grant.
- Substantial and specific danger to public health and safety
- Violations of any law, rule or regulation related to a Federal contract or grant

# NO REPRISALS AGAINST WHISTLEBLOWERS

- By law, you cannot be retaliated against for reporting waste, fraud, or abuse to the OIG
- You may not retaliate against anyone in your organization for reporting to the OIG
- Victims of retaliation can make a complaint to the OIG, which will be investigated

# Section 828 Public Law 112-239

## 41 U.S.C. § 4712





# QUESTIONS?



# HOTLINE

- Report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse
- Information is confidential
- You may remain anonymous

**1-800-452-8210**

or

**[hotline@cncsoig.gov](mailto:hotline@cncsoig.gov)**

Visit us at

**<http://www.cncsoig.gov>**

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