

REFERRALS

In May 2011 we initiated a formal process of referring issues of a managerial nature to the County’s Chief Administrative Officer, or, where appropriate, to County-funded agencies or the State of Maryland for resolution. Prior to making any referral, we perform significant investigatory work to ensure the allegation is credible, and the referee will continue the investigation.

In the cases presented below, we request a response by a certain date. In all cases, we reserve the right to follow up.

During FY 2012, the following matters were referred and responses received.

Intake Dated	Referred To	Nature of Complaint or Allegation	Resolution
3/21/11	Director of Housing and Community Affairs	A Complainant alleged that attendees at a First-Time Homebuyer class required for applicants to the County's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program were requested to complete a form asking whether they had disabilities. The complainant thought collecting the disability information was irrelevant, intrusive, and could result in unlawful discrimination. The County has arranged for a private company, Housing and Community Initiatives, Inc. (HCI), to conduct the First-Time Homebuyer classes. The County requires that applicants to its Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program attend one of these classes.	The OIG was advised that disability information would no longer be collected at these classes, and this was confirmed at the Oct. 29, 2011 class an OIG investigator attended.
6/10/11	MCG Department of General Services	A Complainant alleged that a County employee was using a County vehicle for personal use.	MCG found the employee had misused the vehicle and took appropriate action
9/21/11	County Chief Administrative Officer	A complainant alleged that two county employees in the County Department of Transportation worked short days but were not required to take leave for time away from work.	Per response received, the allegation has been addressed by management.
2/16/11	OIG Investigative Supervisor, State of Maryland Department of Human Resources	A Complainant alleged that an individual was fraudulently receiving welfare benefits from Montgomery County. While the matter may have been a violation of regulations, the OIG determined the matter fell within the jurisdiction of the State to investigate.	The State responded that they were seeking restitution of State overpayments.
6/5/11	County Chief Administrative Officer	A Complainant alleged that a County employee was working a second job, and had not obtained County approval to do so.	The OIG learned that the subject employee submitted a letter of resignation from County government employment.
8/4/11	County Chief Administrative Officer	A Complainant alleged that her son was beat up at a Summer Fun Center Camp sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Recreation, and sought discipline and reprimand for the camp director.	Per response received, this allegation was addressed by management.
9/21/11	OIG Investigative Supervisor, State of Maryland Department of Human Resources	A complainant alleged that a Montgomery County family was committing welfare fraud. While the matter may have been a violation of regulations, the OIG determined the matter fell within the jurisdiction of the State to investigate.	The State OIG acknowledged receipt of the information and their intention to review the matter.
9/26/11	Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Montgomery County Public Schools	A Complainant alleged a conflict of interest in the selection of an artificial turf product as the standard for fields at M-NCPPC and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The firm M-NCPPC tasked with evaluating and recommending the artificial turf standard was alleged to have had a partnership with the selected product's provider.	Both M-NCPPC and MCPS addressed the role of the contractor in their responses to the OIG. The OIG is evaluating the responses.
11/21/11	Montgomery County Public Schools	A Complainant alleged that when all MCPS elementary schools applied for a grant from the USDA, the application stated that the schools did not deny recess to students as punishment for misbehavior. The complainant provided information indicating that two elementary schools did deny recess as punishment. The OIG found that 13 MCPS elementary schools denied recess as punishment, according to their policies posted on the internet.	MCPS responded that staff were reviewing local school discipline policies, that steps were being taken to remedy inconsistencies with Board of Education policy and MCPS regulations, and that guidelines regarding recess would be developed.
11/30/11	OIG Investigative Supervisor, State of Maryland Department of Human Resources	A Complainant alleged that his former wife was using aliases to commit welfare fraud through Temporary Cash Assistance and avoid paying child support.	The Complainant reported that the Division of Program Fraud indicated they were opening a criminal investigation.

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12/13/11	Montgomery County Public Schools	A Complainant alleged that school teachers who were residents of other counties and had enrolled their children in MCPS were not paying non-resident tuition. The OIG determined that MCPS enrollment policy would require payment of discounted tuition for children of non-resident teachers, and that the subjects of the allegation appeared to maintain primary residency outside Montgomery County.	MCPS reported a thorough investigation that confirmed the allegation, and indicated that appropriate actions have been taken, including plans for restitution.
11/1/11	Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County	A Complainant alleged that a tenant receiving a Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) subsidy apparently fraudulently omitted real estate ownership from an income certification form. The form required the listing of real estate and other assets. Land records indicated that the tenant owned real estate. The form states that the applicant is signing under penalties of perjury and that false or incomplete information on the form may result in the termination of the lease agreement. HUD regulations require that HOC consider income and imputed income from assets when determining subsidy amounts.	HOC took action.
3/19/12	Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County	A Complainant alleged that the decision letter from a hearing officer did not contain a reason for the hearing officer's decision. Staff of the HOC had determined that a tenant should not continue to receive an HOC subsidy, because of the tenant's criminal activity. The tenant appealed, and an HOC hearing officer overturned the staff's determination. HUD regulations and the HOC Plan require that hearing decisions include reasons for the decisions. The OIG reviewed 16 recent decision letters, and in 6 of them, the hearing officer overturned staff decisions without giving reasons.	HOC agreed that all future decision letters will include reasons. Recent decision letters, including the one the complainant referenced, were revised to have reasons inserted.
2/1/12	Montgomery County Public Schools	A Complainant reported seeing an alleged County vehicle (with an "LG" license plate) during morning commutes from West Virginia on two separate occasions. Through inquiry to the Department of General Services, the OIG determined the vehicle was assigned to MCPS.	MCPS reported that its policy prohibits take-home vehicles to be driven to out of state residences and that it would investigate the allegation.
5/2/12	OIG Investigative Supervisor, State of Maryland Department of Human Resources	A Complainant alleged that inaccurate information was intentionally entered into a program database.	The MDDHR responded that they are investigating the food stamp issue and will advise us of the outcome upon their conclusion.
6/1/12	MCG Risk Management	A Complainant alleged a county employee made a Workers Compensation claim based on the fraudulent assertion that he was injured while on the job when the injury actually occurred during non-working hours.	The MCG Risk Management Division accepted the referral, but upon investigation could find no one willing to be named who would corroborate Complainant's allegation that the injury occurred when the employee was not working.
6/12/12	MCG Risk Management	A Complainant alleged that a public safety officer claimed and received Service Connected Disability Retirement Benefits when he could possibly have performed a "desk job". The OIG contacted MCG Risk Management Division and confirmed the identified retiree is receiving Service Connected Disability Retirement benefits.	MCG Risk Management division accepted the referral and is investigating the allegation.
6/21/12	County Chief Administrative Officer	A Complainant alleged that a property owner had submitted two separate condominiums as a "principal residence" for a Homestead Act exemption.	The MCG Department of Finance accepted the referral and is investigating the allegation.
6/25/12	MCG Risk Management	A Complainant alleged that a County employee who appeared to be healthy was receiving payments from Workers Compensation funds.	MCG Risk Management Division accepted the referral and is reviewing the allegation.