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Seniors Serve with Improper Background Checks / Disallowed Grant Costs

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A hotline complainant alleged that a Florida Senior Corps grantee (1) inaccurately allocated staff time between the Senior Companion Program (SCP), Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) grants; and (2) improperly used of Senior Corps volunteers (volunteers) assigned to SCP, resulting in inaccurate charges to the Senior Corps grants and noncompliance with program requirements. During the investigation CNCS-OIG investigators determined management staff allowed a majority of their volunteers to serve without a properly completed National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) check.

The investigation revealed that grantee staff were not accurately allocating their time to the proper grant. The investigation also showed that grantee management allowed six SCP volunteers to serve in a fee for service program which charged clients a monthly fee of \$300 for services rendered by the SCP volunteers. The grantee used the \$21,570 in earned fees as an in-kind match to the grant.

While conducting a random sampling of the 141 FGP and 98 SCP active Senior Corps files, investigators found that more than 80 percent of the NSOPW checks had not been properly conducted. Specifically, the NSOPW checks were not nationwide checks, but were instead confined to the State of Florida or local area.

As a result of the CNCS-OIG investigative findings (1) the grantee revised its accounting procedures and hired an independent employment law agency that revised its policies and procedures as well as provided supervisory training on personnel issues, annual audit requirements, and regulatory compliance; (2) CNCS Management disallowed the \$21,570 charged as in-kind match to the grant for in-home services performed by the SCP volunteers; and (3) CNCS Management disallowed \$29,500 for failure to conduct appropriate NSOPW checks. Additionally, CNCS Management is continuing to review the volunteer files for additional disallowed costs regarding the NSOPW checks.

Case ID: 2015-010

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