



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

2021-0017-INVI-P – Architect of the Capitol (AOC) Employee Forged Medical Documentation

Suspected Violations of the AOC “Standards of Conduct,” “Absence and Leave,” “Time and Attendance” and “Government Ethics” Policies; and “D.C. Code § 22-3241 – Forgery,” “18 U.S. Code § 1343 - Fraud by wire, radio or television,” “18 U.S. Code § 641 - Public money, property or records” and “18 U.S. Code § 1001 - Statements or entries generally.” **Substantiated.**

On August 20, 2021, the AOC Office of Inspector General (OIG) received a hotline complaint from the Senate Office Buildings of potential fraudulent medical appointment and excuse notes being provided by former employee, Ms. Monica Terrell, WG-4, Custodial Worker, Senate Office Buildings.

The OIG determined through documentary evidence that Terrell claimed on multiple occasions to be a patient at two different medical practices. Further investigation and testimonial evidence later revealed that Terrell was only a patient at one of the medical practices. She had never been a patient at the second medical practice. Additionally, Terrell identified an employee within the second medical practice who had provided her the blank excuse notes to use.

The investigation revealed that Terrell had used a total of 68 hours of Annual Leave, 22 hours of Sick Leave, 14 hours of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) and 56 hours of Absent Without Leave (AWOL) during Pay Periods 1 (January 3 – 16, 2021), 6 (March 14 – 27, 2021), 7 (March 28 – April 10, 2021), 12 (June 6 – June 19, 2021) and 14 (July 4 – July 17, 2021) in conjunction with six fraudulent medical excuses. AOC Order 630-1, Absence and Leave, March 28, 2014 states that all employees are required to provide medical documentation in support of their sick leave absences in excess of three days. Terrell provided the forged documentation upon her return to work following both approved and unapproved absences, whether it was sick, annual or administrative leave.

Although she used her own earned leave (or was not compensated) during the time frames to pay her salary, Terrell forged the medical documentation in support of the leave. Data provided by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer showed that the AOC continued to pay her Civilian Personnel Benefits during these time frames. The total cost of Civilian Personnel Benefits that could have been put to better use¹ for the Pay Periods in question was identified as \$2,011.40.

AOC Order 630-1, Absence and Leave, March 28, 2014, Section 8.2, AWOL, states, “An employee is subject to disciplinary action for AWOL.” AOC Order 752-1, Discipline, dated December 18, 2015, Appendix A, Table 1 states that “Typical Penalties for Infractions, the published penalties for the aforementioned violation are as follows: Violation of Attendance policies. First Offense is Reprimand; Second Offense is Suspension; Subsequent Offenses is Removal.” From January 1, 2021, through August 20, 2021, Terrell was AWOL for a total of 184 hours. During that time, no formal disciplinary proceedings to address her AWOL status were initiated.

¹ As defined in the Section 5(f)(4) of the IG Act, the term “recommendation that funds be put to better use” means a recommendation by the OIG that funds could be used more efficiently if management of an establishment took actions to implement and complete the recommendation.



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Investigative Summary

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Final Management Action: The United States Attorney's Office declined to prosecute Terrell based on the AOC's ability to handle administratively. On June 2, 2022, Terrell resigned in lieu of termination. The OIG referred the unethical behavior of the medical practice providing the excuses to the D.C. Board of Medicine for follow up as they deem appropriate. The case is closed.