



## NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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### **Former Chief Information Security and Privacy Officer May Have Intentionally Claimed Duplicate Travel Costs**

State Auditor Mike Foley released a letter today to the Office of the Chief Information Officer, detailing the results of a recent investigation into suspicious travel reimbursement claims made by the State of Nebraska's former Security and Privacy Officer. According to that letter, the ex-official, who was responsible for overseeing data security and privacy for the State, appears to have intentionally duplicated expense reimbursement claims for his personal benefit.

Records reviewed by Foley's staff suggest that the former Security and Privacy Officer intentionally submitted travel expense reimbursement requests to both the State and third-party organizations for the same expenditures, using the identical documentation on each occasion. As a result, he is alleged to have received hundreds of dollars of undue reimbursement payments from the government and certain professional groups alike. For one of those evidently duplicate travel reimbursement claims, Nebraska's erstwhile top data security officer received a virtual card that was later used at Hy-Vee and a local surgical company in Lincoln.

In addition to giving rise to concerns regarding possible theft, forgery, and even abuse of public records, the putative double-dealing by the former Security and Privacy Officer could implicate him in having violated Nebraska law forbidding use of public office or resources for unauthorized personal gain.

"That these allegations of financial impropriety are leveled at someone to whom the State's data security and privacy was entrusted should give everyone pause," Foley remarked. "Almost as amazing," he continued, "is that a State employee making over \$120,000 a year, as in this case, would risk it all for a mere fraction of that amount – but that is what appears to have occurred. Nevertheless, regardless of the numbers involved, my office remains dedicated to protecting all public funds to the last penny."

The Chief Information Officer was fully cooperative and responded to the findings in Foley's letter by pledging to take quick corrective action and to cooperate fully with any forthcoming investigations into the allegations against his former employee. In addition to flagging the potential fraud, I believe he has taken all the appropriate actions to address the occurrence of this matter.

Due to the seriousness of this matter, Foley's team has been working with the Nebraska Attorney General's Office, and has also forwarded the information in his letter to the Nebraska State Patrol, the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission, and the Lancaster County Attorney for further review.

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