



Ken Burke, CPA

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REPORT NO. 2016-33

TO: Ken Burke, CPA, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

FROM: Hector Collazo, Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive
Division of Inspector General

DIST: David Bateman, Director, Court and Operational Services
Bill Burgess, Manager, Criminal Court Customer Services

SUBJECT: Investigation of Citizen Fabricating Clerk Documents

DATE: November 21, 2016

The Division of Inspector General's Public Integrity Unit (PIU) received allegations of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse. We investigated the following allegations related to the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller (Clerk) records.

The complainant alleges that the respondent:

- Fabricated Clerk records, and, thereby, violated Florida Statutes.
- Created fraudulent Clerk documents showing no criminal record to provide prospective employers in order to obtain employment.

The complainant did provide documentation to assist with the investigation.

To determine whether the allegations were substantiated, we reviewed policies, procedures, and any other records deemed appropriate. We also conducted interviews of staff and other parties, as needed. Our investigation was performed according to the *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* and *The Florida Inspectors General Standards Manual* from The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.



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The Division of Inspector General investigation of the allegations has determined that the allegations noted above were *substantiated*.

We determined, through our investigation, that the respondent fabricated Clerk documents in an attempt to obtain employment. The respondent legally obtained certified copies of her case documents, extracted the certified copy stamp and Deputy Clerk signature, and transposed them onto fabricated documents. The respondent used additional publicly available resources to create the fabricated Clerk documents, which were intended to make the recipients believe that the respondent had no criminal record.

We determined the respondent created at least five criminal record verification letters with the intention of misleading potential employers to obtain employment. In two cases, employment was obtained before the employers learned the letters were fraudulent. In addition, we determined the respondent embellished many of the entries on her resume by expanding the dates of employment, including additional duties, and fabricated a Medical Assistant certificate.

During the course of the investigation, the PIU also determined the respondent's employment was terminated for cause by an employer in 2013 for forging a nurse's signature on a medical note for a friend. There is an open investigation by the Largo Police Department regarding the alleged forgery.

The PIU will be forwarding the evidence obtained during the course of this investigation to the State Attorney's Office requesting their review of the facts for potential prosecution. In addition, the PIU contacted Region 3 Clearwater Circuit Administrator of the Florida Department of Corrections regarding this case and will provide the case documentation according to the Circuit Administrator's instruction.

We want to thank the Clerk's Criminal Court Customer Service Department for their assistance and cooperation during this investigation.