

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Investigations of Improper Activities by State Employees, July 2004 Through December 2004

INVESTIGATION I2004-0834 (REPORT I2005-1),
MARCH 2005

California Department of Corrections' response as of
November 2005

Investigative Highlights . . .

The California Department of Corrections (Corrections) improperly granted registered nurses (nurses) an increase in pay associated with inmate supervision as follows:

- Between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2003, Corrections paid 25 nurses \$238,184 more than they were entitled to receive.*
 - Corrections failed to maintain sufficient documentation for 17 of the 25 nurses and although Corrections provided records for the remaining eight nurses, we found that most of these nurses failed to incur the required number of supervisory hours to merit the pay increase.*
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We investigated and substantiated an allegation that the California Department of Corrections (Corrections)¹ improperly granted registered nurses (nurses) an increase in pay associated with inmate supervision that they were not entitled to receive.

Finding: Corrections improperly granted nurses premium pay associated with inmate supervision.

We found that 25 nurses at four institutions received increased pay associated with inmate supervision even though they either did not supervise inmates for the minimum number of hours required or they lacked sufficient documentation to support their eligibility to receive the increased pay. Between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2003, Corrections paid these nurses \$238,184 more than they were entitled to receive.

Corrections reported that it could not provide documentation to support the pay increase it authorized for 17 of the 25 nurses because the institutions that employed these nurses either had no inmate supervisory hours to report, did not require nurses to track these hours, lacked sufficient documentation to support the hours claimed, or had destroyed all timekeeping records relating to inmate supervision. Although Corrections provided figures showing that the remaining eight nurses did supervise inmates, we found that in most instances these nurses failed to incur the required number of supervisory hours to merit the pay increase. For example, one nurse received a pay increase

¹ As of July 1, 2005, the California Department of Corrections has been renamed the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

of approximately \$7,983 over a 16-month period. However, the nurse met the inmate supervisory threshold of 173 hours per month on only two occasions, resulting in an overpayment of \$7,030. Of the 25 nurses we reviewed that received this premium pay, we found that \$238,184 of the \$255,509 in inmate supervisory pay received was not justified.

Corrections' Action: Partial corrective action taken.

As of June 2005, Corrections reported that it had obtained sufficient documentation to justify the pay increase it gave to 10 of 25 nurses identified in our report.



However, Corrections has yet to provide us with this documentation for our review. Previously, Corrections had reported it was unable to provide sufficient documentation to support the premium pay for these nurses. Corrections was unable to locate such documentation for three nurses and has initiated plans to collect these overpayments. In addition, Corrections has yet to complete its analysis of 12 of the 25 nurses identified in our report.