

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

K #:10-023

Date Opened:

Date Closed: August 3, 2010

Name of investigator: Kennedy Rosario

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Background:

Jackson Memorial Hospital / Jackson Health System / Public Health Trust is a subordinate entity of Miami-Dade County, its management, staff and employees are required to comply with the Miami Dade County Code of Ethics Ordinance.

Trummell Valdera (Valdera), at all times material to this investigation, was the Human Resources Department Senior Vice President for the Jackson Health System (JHS).

Allegation:

On or about January / February 2010 the COE and JHS received numerous e-mail communications ostensibly from a Mandy Moore alleging, among other complaints, that Valdera placed an unknown and unnamed employee during the period of June through September 2008 on the JHS payroll. Said "ghost" employee, according to Moore, was in actuality employed by Valdera as her residential housekeeper / maid.

Additionally, Moore's communiqués alleged that Valdera has a Deborah Dinicolantonio (aka Dinik) "on the Jackson payroll for several years now earning six figures \$100,000.00+ salary for doing much of nothing while she lives permanently in Philadelphia and works another full-time job".

This investigation will concern itself with these allegations as possible Exploitation of Official Position Code of Ethics violations.

As these allegations may also constitute criminal violations the COE asked that the Miami-Dade Police Department Public Corruption Investigations Bureau (PCIB) participate in the investigation / fact gathering.

PCIB Detective Luis Rodriguez will head the PCIB investigation.

Investigation:

Please refer to the attached PCIB report (Exhibit 1).

Interviews / sworn statements conducted are attached as:

Exhibit 2 Debbie Louise Lawrence JHS Recruitment Office Manager

Exhibit 3 Maria Huot-Barrientos JHS Corporate Director of Human Resources

Exhibit 4 Felisa Yarns JHS Executive Assistant to Valdera

Exhibit 5 Trummell Valdera

During the course of the investigation the COE requested numerous documents including:

Electronic mail from Valdera, Hout and Yarns with an emphasis on communications with Dinicolantonio

Work product submitted by Dinicolantonio.

Personnel Action Memorandums for Dinicolantonio

Dinicolantonio Personnel File

Valdera Personnel File

Dinicolantonio produced work products

A listing of all HR employees hired / terminated during the January 2007 to the date of request.

A list of employees that were classified as "direct report" status to Valdera.

In addition to the requested items, numerous interviews and meetings with JHS personnel were held with PCIB and COE investigators.

Note:

All items alluded to in this report have been made a permanent part of the investigative file.

Attempts to engage Mandy Moore in face to face dialogue proved not fruitful; additionally Mandy Moore may be a pseudo name for an unknown employee as there is no Mandy Moore listed as a JHS employee.

During the Valdera **sworn** statement the question of the “ghost” employee was broached, Valdera denied the allegation citing that she contracted with a housekeeping service and not an individual maid.

CONCLUSION:

The COE concurs with the written findings of the PCIB.

An exhaustive analysis of the electronic mailings spanning years of inter-office communications as well as the literally boxes of work product either produced or collaborated by Dinicolantonio by the COE evinces that Dinicolantonio was not “doing much of nothing” during her tenure with JHS.

While it is true that Dinicolantonio’s hiring / salary was approved by Valdera it is also valid that Valdera as a JHS Vice President had, under her HR department, authority to do so.

It is also true that Dinicolantonio labored, for long periods, outside the physical confines of JHS, as her communiqués indicate. However, such an arrangement appears not to be unique and is not specifically banned by JHS policy.

As to her salary the COE / PCIB is in no position to evaluate that worth.

The allegations enumerated above were not substantiated, therefore it is requested that this investigation be closed.