



**Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller**

November 4, 2019

## **Food Program Participant Received Thousands in Excess Reimbursements** *Rehoboth Outreach Ministries Submitted False Claims and Documents*

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has completed an investigation of Rehoboth Outreach Ministries based in Nashville, Tennessee.

Rehoboth participated in the both the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which are administered by Tennessee's Department of Human Services (DHS). These programs provide services which include providing free meals to children.

Rehoboth was approved by DHS to provide summer food program meals at 25 locations including schools, community centers, and apartment complexes in various Middle Tennessee counties.

Investigators determined Rehoboth's executive director knowingly submitted questionable claims for reimbursement. These false claims included thousands of meals that were never served. Investigators determined that Rehoboth received at least \$10,906 in excess reimbursements from DHS for these meals.

Rehoboth's executive director also created and submitted to DHS false lease documents indicating Rehoboth's office rental was \$4,000 per month, when in fact the rent was only \$750. The executive director told investigators he did this to increase the total program budget in order to create a cushion to pay unexpected expenses.

During the time Rehoboth participated in the programs, DHS reviewed and routinely questioned whether some of the Rehoboth's claimed expenses were allowable under the contract.

DHS auditors identified more than \$103,000 of Rehoboth's expenses as unallowable costs and directed Rehoboth to reimburse this amount to the program account. Rehoboth did not make this reimbursement, and in February 2018, Rehoboth voluntarily withdrew from the food programs. Because Rehoboth did not participate in subsequent food programs, DHS did not pursue collection of these funds.

To view the investigative report, go to: <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/investigations/find.html>

If you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 800.232.5454, or file a report online at: [www.comptroller.tn.gov/hotline](http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/hotline). Follow us on twitter: [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT)

Media contact: John Dunn, Director of Communications, 615.401.7755 or [john.dunn@cot.tn.gov](mailto:john.dunn@cot.tn.gov)

