



**Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller**

June 17, 2020

## **Houston County EMS Director Indicted After Being Paid Improperly** *Director Double-Dipped on Time and Manipulated Hours Worked*

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has completed an investigation resulting in the indictment of Stephen Graybill, the director of Houston County Emergency Medical Services. The investigation began after county officials reported information to the Comptroller's Office.

The investigation focused on compensation that Graybill received from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019. During this time, Graybill not only served as director, but he also worked as an AEMT on ambulance shifts (responding to emergency calls) to help with staffing shortages. The former Houston County Mayor verbally authorized Graybill to receive pay for the hours he worked on ambulance shifts in addition to his monthly director salary.



Investigators determined that Graybill received \$22,230.36 in improper payments.

Some of this money (\$7,579.46) was paid to Graybill because he claimed to have worked as the director and an AEMT as the same time – a practice of double-dipping time. Investigators reviewed time sheets showing Graybill claimed to have worked 725.5 hours as both the director and an AEMT.

The remaining improper payments (\$14,650.90) were received by Graybill after he manipulated the hours he worked between the director and AEMT positions. Graybill would manipulate his director hours by working weekends or shorter work weeks. At the same time, he worked excess hours as an AEMT. Graybill was paid a salary for his director position, so this practice allowed him to earn unnecessary and additional hourly compensation as an AEMT. Graybill also could have chosen to work ambulance shifts as part of his director duties.

Comptroller investigators also identified \$20,308.23 in questionable payments received by Graybill. Although Graybill is a licensed AEMT, he paid himself at a higher 'paramedic' pay rate. He also received questionable compensation related to unsupported hours and noncompliance with the EMS holiday pay policy.

On June 15, 2020, the Houston County Grand Jury indicted Stephen Graybill on one count of theft over \$10,000.

"A lack of oversight and internal controls allowed this situation to take place," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "The unique pay arrangement was never documented between the former county mayor, the former payroll clerk, and the EMS director. The EMS director was also allowed to sign-off on his own time sheets without oversight or review."

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

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