



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

July 19, 2021

Former Employee Stole from Carter County Head Start Program

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in the indictment of Joyce Parsons, the former administrative assistant for Carter County's Head Start program.

Investigators determined that Parsons used Head Start credit cards to make at least \$8,657 in unauthorized personal purchases including clothing, groceries, cosmetics, household goods, and personal hygiene products.

Parsons admitted that she made the purchases and told investigators that she signed other employee's names to her receipts to conceal her activities.

Head Start officials first identified and reported the questionable activity to the Comptroller's Office. Parsons was suspended without pay on January 22, 2020 and her employment was terminated on April 13, 2020.

In July 2021, the Carter County Grand Jury indicted Joyce Grace Parsons on one count of theft over \$2,500.

In addition to Parsons' misappropriation, investigators are also questioning Head Start disbursements totaling \$6,276. This money was used for food purchases, travel, car rentals, and supplies; however, the purchases were not supported with itemized receipts or other supporting documentation.

"We appreciate that Head Start officials reported this activity to our Office," said Comptroller Jason Mumpower. "I am also pleased to see that they are taking steps to improve management oversight, the purchasing process, and the review and approval of travel and expense claims."

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: tncot.cc/fraud. Follow us on twitter [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT) and Instagram [@tncot](https://www.instagram.com/tncot)

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