



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

March 11, 2022

Former State Employee Indicted After Wrongfully Obtaining Grant Funds

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in the indictment of Gina Morton, a former employee of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (MHSAS).

The investigation began after MHSAS officials discovered that Morton was receiving compensation from a MHSAS grantee agency for work, some of which she only could have performed during the same hours she was working for the state.

Morton began working for MHSAS in 2007 as a Mental Health Program Specialist. Beginning in January 2012, Morton accepted an additional position with MHSAS grantee Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System (Volunteer) as a school-based liaison working with high school students.

Morton's job with Volunteer required her to be physically present at Holloway High School in Murfreesboro. Her state job required her to work from the MHSAS headquarters in downtown Nashville.

Comptroller investigators determined that Morton received \$82,913 in pay from Volunteer for work she did not perform. Morton fraudulently represented that she had worked at least 6,160 hours at the high school for Volunteer, when in fact she was working onsite at MHSAS.

Furthermore, grant contracts prohibit MHSAS employees from being paid with grant funds. Morton's salary with Volunteer was paid with grant reimbursement money paid by MHSAS.

In January 2018, Volunteer officials discovered that Morton was employed full-time by MHSAS. Volunteer reported the grant contract violation to MHSAS and accepted Morton's resignation. After an internal investigation, Morton also resigned her position with MHSAS effective March 20, 2018.

In February 2022, the Davidson County Grand Jury indicted Gina Morton on one count of the theft over \$60,000.

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).

Media contact: John Dunn, Director of Communications, 615.401.7755 or john.dunn@cot.tn.gov

