

Kimberly J. Sanders



October 3, 2017

Felicia Norwood
Director
Healthcare and Family Services
201 South Grand Ave. E
Springfield, IL 62704

Dear Ms. Norwood:

This letter is to inform you of my resignation from the contract position Business Analyst within Healthcare and Family Services for the State of Illinois. Not only is it important to inform you that I am resigning, but I think it is imperative to inform you of why and to point out some troubling things I have noted during my brief time within the division.

First, I am a long-time resident of Illinois and I have heard many good and bad things regarding the state government. I was approached by Capitol Strategies a state contractor regarding the position of Business Analyst on the IMPACT project near the end of July. I was hesitant but I went through the interview process even though I informed them I was in the process of moving out of state.

To start I interviewed over the phone with Tracy Sims the onsite project manager who works for Cognizant. She then set up a time later that evening for me to speak to two gentlemen from Cognizant one of which is the overall project manager (on paper at least). It had to be later due to the time variance. They both had heavy accents making it difficult to communicate effectively during the conversation. That didn't seem to deter them and they didn't appear to be interested with the substance of my answers. For instance, I explained that I was familiar with credentialing, though I did not have firsthand experience and they simply brushed past this. In fact, they attempted to reword my answer a couple of times to fit. I simply reiterated that I did not have direct experience with credentialing. I was then scheduled for an onsite interview with the HFS Bureau Chief Mashelle Rose and Director Robin Holler along with the onsite Project Manager from Cognizant Tracy Sims. During the interview, I was asked basic questions and a couple not so basic. Mashelle Rose stated that "the state staff we will have you sit with to get you up to speed will never have the mental capacity you do" and asked if that would bother me.

Though I had planned to move, I discussed with my contract agency and worked a way for me to stay in the community and give this a chance. I continued with the process and committed to starting August

23, 2017. I approached this it with an open mind and was excited to be a part of a team that had the potential to affect real change. Initially, I had been told I would be working with the training portion of the project reviewing, assessing, revamping, and at some point, delivering the training which was exciting to me. Then, I began.

I reported to work August 23rd and was greeted by Tracy Sims. I spent some time speaking with her and then introduced to April Eichen who would be doing my "training." Training consisted of approximately 4 hours of April mostly reading a 30-page manual then sitting side-by-side with other contract staff as they took calls from providers.

During the first few days of training I was instructed to do the state mandatory training for HIPAA, Computer Security, and Ethics as well as any of the Cognizant specific computer based training assigned to me. To do this, I was given the user name and password of April Eichen. It worked a couple of times and I could print out the sheets to document I had viewed the training material. Then it stopped working because not only were they (April Eichen and Tracy Sims) having me sign on with April's credentials, but they were also having another consultant, Kyrsten Wanker, who had started a shortly before me, sign on with it as well. During the entire week of not having a way to log on, I was instructed to simply read the manual (30 pages) and take notes. Expecting that I would be in the role of trainer at some point, I questioned Tracy about the practice to which she replied that's Illinois for you. It just takes a while to get anything done. I told her if they ever expected me to give someone my user name and password, I would need that in writing.

I witnessed or heard the following:

1. My Social Security Number (as well as two other consultants) being shared by email to non-employees of the state. Resolution from Tracy Sims was to "just delete it."
2. Violations of the Code of Federal Regulations and other applicable laws
 - a. Providers being enrolled by non-state staff
 - b. State computer systems auto approving provider enrollments and those approvals give the appearance that a state worker has reviewed the data
 - c. Provider Enrollment approvals without all required credentialing
3. Script being run to "answer" the application review questions in order to process applications quicker. Told by state staff that upper management didn't care that the answers may or may not be correct, they were simply interested with production numbers.
4. Project manager Tracy Sims indicated there were at least 700 errors found on applications approved by contractors from January to May 2017. When I asked how the errors were found, I was told it was a manual process by which April Eichen was reviewing. April indicated she found errors including wrong provider types, inaccurate enrollment dates, wrong specialty types, etc. They expected more errors to be discovered.
 - a. We were told if the media found out about this it would be a nightmare for Cognizant.

- b. Tracy said she divulged the information to Mashelle Rose and her orders were to "fix it"
- 5. Providers credentialed under the wrong provider types (MD credentialed as a Pediatrician)
- 6. Provider information not handled appropriately by contractors and state staff
 - a. Social Security Number written down and left on desks or thrown in regular waste
 - b. Lack of or improper authentication before providing information over phone or via email communication
- 7. Training manual, created by April Eichen, available on the HFS shared drive includes screenshots of real provider information including social security numbers and other personal information that has not been redacted appropriately.
- 8. April Eichen (with the knowledge of Tracy Sims) giving her state assigned computer user name and password to me and others to use.
- 9. State Manager Mashelle Rose creating busy work to keep contractors around and verbally saying that this is what is needed to keep them around
- 10. State Managers discussing how the project is a failure, but Senior Management is on the hook for this, so the reports better look good
- 11. Contractor Sherri Butler working on the credentialing project instructed contract worker Teresa Anderson to find information needed to certify IMPACT and that if she couldn't find it she should just "fudge" it. Including falsifying documents as to the build and progress of IMPACT
- 12. Falsification of reports showing the progress of Impact and discussions about the falsification
- 13. A deceased provider being enrolled
- 14. Discussions of how CNSI had given campaign cash to legislators in order to get the gig that is now worth 300 million dollars
- 15. Discussions with Mashelle Rose that were to the effect they have to keep us (contractors) around because we are smart and the union staff are not as bright
- 16. Discussions of how IBM offered to build the same system as Cognizant for 14 million dollars
- 17. Discussions with my supervisor Tracy Sims about how her job is to just make sure we stay busy with work to do.
- 18. Discussion with my supervisor about how we are not to talk to state workers because we are doing their work and it would cause union problems
- 19. State workers talking about how CNSI was in trouble in Louisiana and how the FBI had a whistleblower report showing that management threatened to hire a hit man to take him out
- 20. Mashelle Rose giving orders multiple times a day than undoing those orders the same day. I have seen nothing but chaos from the confusing direction from Ms. Rose
- 21. How the death match file is not checked during the enrollment process, because the software is not able to check it as part of the enrollment process, therefore causing deceased providers to be enrolled and that this should be kept secret because if the public knew about it they would be in trouble
- 22. The project is clearly being mismanaged and seems to encourage the use of contract workers for jobs that could be completed by state staff if they were trained properly.

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23. Was not given a job description or vision of the project because it was changed frequently at the whim of Bureau Chief Mashelle Rose
24. As I'm finishing this letter, I was asked by a state supervisor for my user name and password to retrieve the files I created because she didn't think Tracy Sims (or anyone from Cognizant) would share them with her. She feared they would delete them instead. I did not share my user name and password. I told her she should check with DoIT to see if they could assist.

It is the above list is why I am resigning my position. I cannot ethically be a part of the fleecing of Illinois by these contractors. And, while this is not an exhaustive list, hopefully it gives you some foundation to review the IMPACT project and management.

Personally, I am appalled. To witness this degree of mismanagement and questionable activity in the brief time – approximately 6 weeks – that I was there is unfathomable to me. I sincerely hope this is not representative of Illinois State government.

Sincerely,

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[REDACTED]
Kimberly J. Sanders
[REDACTED]