

Deficit Reduction Act of 2005

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 requires entities to provide employees with information regarding the False Claims Act. (FCA). Under the FCA, those who knowingly submit, or cause another person or entity to submit, false claims for payment for government funds are liable for three times the government's damages plus civil penalties of \$5,500 to \$11,000 per false claim. The FCA contains qui tam, or whistleblower provisions. Qui tam is a unique mechanism in the law that allows citizens with evidence of fraud against government contracts and programs to sue, on behalf of the government, in order to recover stolen funds. Furthermore, to encourage citizens, certain protections are in place to shield the individual from retaliation for bringing suit against his or her employer. The FCA protects anyone who lawfully acts in investigation for, initiation of, testimony for, or assistance in a claim under the act. The protections are still in effect if the claims under the FCA have not been filed. The individual is protected against discharge, demotion, suspension, threats, harassment, and discrimination. The Department of Mental Health Compliance Plan established policies and procedures that significantly advance the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse. For detailed policy information or to report suspected violations and to assist employees in reporting claims of fraud, waste, and abuse to the appropriate investigation body, please contact the HRC Compliance Officer (Jackie Breland) at 601-664-6100 or the Personnel Department at 601-664-6080.