



STATE OF OHIO  
**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

RANDALL J. MEYER, INSPECTOR GENERAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**OHIO INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION FINDS STATE CONTRACTOR IMPROPERLY  
STEERED CONTRACTS TO BUSINESS PARTNERS AND MISUSED STATE RESOURCES**  
Columbus, Ohio, December 19, 2019

During the course of a series of investigations involving IT procurement practices, the Office of the Inspector General identified questionable activity between Rex Plouck, a former contractor with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (ODAS) and Office of Health Transformation, and his private employer, Advocate Solutions, LLC (AS).

Investigators determined that Rex Plouck misused his state email account to steer business to his employer Advocate Solutions. Investigators reviewed records showing that Plouck received emails from former ODAS Deputy Director Devin Mehta, on multiple occasions, containing IT contractor position descriptions. Plouck then forwarded the information to his business associates at Advocate Solutions. In response, Plouck or another AS employee would send a contractor's resume to ODAS' Mehta. ODAS then created a Request to Purchase and a Release and Permit request that was expedited and approved within days of submission. The contractors were continually renewed year after year or replaced with other AS employees.

Investigators determined that Plouck's actions as a contractor for the State of Ohio were not in the best interests of Ohio, compromised open and fair competition, and ultimately benefited Plouck and his AS business partners. In addition, investigators noted numerous issues regarding ODAS' failure to adhere to purchasing policies and directives.

Ohio Inspector General Report of Investigation file number 2018-CA00012 is now available at:  
<http://watchdog.ohio.gov/investigations/2019investigations.aspx>

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