

RCW 43.09.186 Toll-free efficiency hotline—Duties—Annual overview and update.

(1) Within existing funds, the state auditor must establish a toll-free telephone line that is available to public employees and members of the public to recommend measures to improve efficiency in state and local government and to report waste, inefficiency, or abuse, as well as examples of efficiency or outstanding achievement, by state and local agencies, public employees, or persons under contract with state and local agencies.

(2) The state auditor must prepare information that explains the purpose of the hotline, and the hotline telephone number must be prominently displayed in the information. Hotline information must be posted in all government offices in locations where it is most likely to be seen by the public. The state auditor must publicize the availability of the toll-free hotline through print and electronic media and other means of communication with the public.

(3) The state auditor must designate staff to be responsible for processing recommendations for improving efficiency and reports of waste, inefficiency, or abuse received through the hotline. The state auditor must conduct an initial review of each recommendation for efficiency and report of waste, inefficiency, or abuse made by public employees and members of the public. Following the initial review, the state auditor must determine which assertions require further examination or audit under the auditor's current authority and must assign qualified staff.

(4) The identity of a person making a report through the hotline, by email through the state auditor's website, or other means of communication is confidential at all times unless the person making a report consents to disclosure by written waiver, or until the investigation described in subsection (3) of this section is complete. All documents related to the report and subsequent investigation are also confidential until completion of the investigation or audit or when the documents are otherwise statutorily exempt from public disclosure.

(5) The state auditor must prepare a written determination of the results of the investigation performed, including any background information that the auditor deems necessary. The state auditor must report publicly the conclusions of each investigation and recommend ways to correct any deficiency and to improve efficiency. The reports must be distributed to the affected state agencies.

(6) The state auditor must provide an annual overview and update of hotline investigations, including the results and efficiencies achieved, to the legislature and to the appropriate legislative committees. [2007 c 41 § 1.]