

# AUDITOR-CONTROLLER REMOVAL OF COUNTY RECORDS COMPLAINT 99B-24

## Summary

The Grand Jury investigated complaints involving the removal of original expense reports from the office of the Auditor-Controller. The Assistant Auditor-Controller was interviewed during the course of the investigation.

The Grand Jury investigation involved a single known incident, but investigation indicates this is much broader in scope. The Grand Jury found that:

- ❖ Original records of an elected official were removed from County offices.
- ❖ County staff took original records home.
- ❖ There is no countywide policy regarding the removal of original records or filed materials from a supervised depository.

This casual approach to protecting important records from unsupervised removal and possible alteration is unacceptable. The Grand Jury recommends that the County enact and enforce a policy that protects original documents against loss or unauthorized alteration.

## Discussion

The Grand Jury found that in at least one instance **original** documents were removed temporarily from County safekeeping and taken home. The Grand Jury could not find a policy prohibiting the removal of original documents. The security of records is vitally important in protecting the credibility of government and its relationship with the public and its own employees. Unless there is assurance that documents are guarded against loss or unauthorized alteration, their accuracy may well be questioned.

## Finding 1

There is no written policy within the Auditor-Controller's office regarding the removal of official records and files.

## **Recommendation 1**

The Auditor-Controller's office needs to establish and enforce a department-wide policy that prohibits the removal, for any reason whatsoever, of **original** records or filed materials from a supervised depository.

## **Finding 2**

There is no written countywide policy regarding the removal of official records and files.

## **Recommendation 2**

The Board of Supervisors and County Executive Officer need to establish a countywide policy regarding the removal of **original** official records and files from all departments.

## **Respondents**

Placer County Board of Supervisors  
Placer County Executive Officer  
Placer County Auditor-Controller

## **RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:**

The Honorable Larry D. Gaddis  
Presiding Judge, Superior Court  
County of Placer  
Historic Courthouse  
101 Maple Street  
Auburn, CA 95603