

3/21/2013

Chair: Senator Alan Bates

Co-Chair: Representative Nancy Nathanson

Joint Sub-Committee on Human Services

My name is Gina Santacroce. I am a proud eleven-year public employee for the Department of Human Services-Program Integrity, where I am a Human Service Specialist 4, Program Accuracy Reviewer.

Hundreds of thousands of Oregonians have been humbled by the necessity to seek the assistance of their state government to feed their children and themselves, to live and sleep indoors, to have the assurance of health care for their children and themselves, and to remain a proud member of their communities.

I am so grateful for my career. I audit SNAP, Medical and Employment Related Day Care cases to ensure our clients/customers receive the correct and timely benefits as required by Federal and State Laws.

I see my colleagues working **so diligently** to remain faithful to the law and policies, which govern their duties and yet provide appropriate and timely benefits to those who request them. The direct correlation between providing accurate and timely benefits with federal audit errors are a glaring example of insufficient staffing. I myself have 245-260 cases per month to audit. We are staffed at below acceptable levels. We are working harder and longer than ever before. The directive for staff and our line managers is to do more with less. We even have line managers carrying caseloads because we cannot keep the current trend of new applicants to current staffing which is at 70%. We are truly giving all in this time of great need. The level of insufficient staffing adds not just the rushed nature to correctly determine eligibility; it places The Department at risk for federal fines. It also creates more difficulties completing other required administrative tasks, and lengthening of the time Oregonians would be required to wait for administered range of services, creating even more crisis in an already vulnerable situation.

Gina M Santacroce