

15C.02 LIABILITY FOR CERTAIN ACTS.

(a) A person who commits any act described in clauses (1) to (7) is liable to the state or the political subdivision for a civil penalty of not less than \$5,500 and not more than \$11,000 per false or fraudulent claim, plus three times the amount of damages that the state or the political subdivision sustains because of the act of that person, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b):

(1) knowingly presents, or causes to be presented, to an officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval;

(2) knowingly makes or uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement to get a false or fraudulent claim paid or approved by the state or a political subdivision;

(3) knowingly conspires to either present a false or fraudulent claim to the state or a political subdivision for payment or approval or makes, uses, or causes to be made or used a false record or statement to obtain payment or approval of a false or fraudulent claim;

(4) has possession, custody, or control of public property or money used, or to be used, by the state or a political subdivision and knowingly delivers or causes to be delivered to the state or a political subdivision less money or property than the amount for which the person receives a receipt;

(5) is authorized to prepare or deliver a receipt for money or property used, or to be used, by the state or a political subdivision and knowingly prepares or delivers a receipt that falsely represents the money or property;

(6) knowingly buys, or receives as a pledge of an obligation or debt, public property from an officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision who lawfully may not sell or pledge the property; or

(7) knowingly makes or uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement to conceal, avoid, or decrease an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the state or a political subdivision.

(b) The court may assess not less than two times the amount of damages that the state or the political subdivision sustains because of the act of the person if:

(1) the person committing a violation under paragraph (a) furnished an officer or employee of the state or the political subdivision responsible for investigating the false or fraudulent claim violation with all information known to the person about the violation within 30 days after the date on which the person first obtained the information;

(2) the person fully cooperated with any investigation by the state or the political subdivision of the violation; and

(3) at the time the person furnished the state or the political subdivision with information about the violation, no criminal prosecution, civil action, or administrative action had been commenced under this chapter with respect to the violation and the person did not have actual knowledge of the existence of an investigation into the violation.

(c) A person violating this section is also liable to the state or the political subdivision for the costs of a civil action brought to recover any penalty or damages.

(d) A person is not liable under this section for mere negligence, inadvertence, or mistake with respect to activities involving a false or fraudulent claim.

(e) An employer is not liable for an act committed by a nonmanagerial employee that violates this section, unless the employer had knowledge of the act, ratified the act, or was reckless in the hiring or supervision of the employee.

(f) Except in cases where proof of specific intent to defraud the state or a political subdivision is found, a person is not liable under this section if:

(1) the person has been informed by the original source that single or multiple false or fraudulent claims have been made against the state or a political subdivision; and

(2) the person repays the amount of actual damages to the state or the political subdivision within 45 days after being so informed. If the person has a compliance office, an original source is not considered to have informed the person of a false or fraudulent claim unless the original source reported it to the person's compliance office.

History: 2009 c 101 art 2 s 25

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 2009, chapter 101, article 2, section 25, is effective July 1, 2010. Laws 2009, chapter 101, article 2, section 25, the effective date.