



## A Review

'Whistleblowing: A Guide to Government Reward Programs'

By Joel Hesch, Goshen Press, \$15.95

# Reward for 'Whistleblowing'

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If you knew of a company cheating the government out of money, would you report it?

What if the government paid you millions of dollars for the tip?

The U.S. Department of Justice has a program designed to do just that, and Liberty University Law Professor Joel Hesch wants the world to know about it and others of its kind.

He wrote the book, "Whistleblowing: A Guide to Government Reward Programs," released in October. In the book, he

### FOR MORE INFO:

► The book can be purchased at 1-800-BOOK-LOG, Barnes & Noble or it can be ordered from other local bookstores

► Hesch's Web site, [www.HowToReportFraud.com](http://www.HowToReportFraud.com), offers free information for reporting other kinds of fraud, ranging from identity theft, Internet scams, stock market fraud and mail fraud.

describes the types of eligible cases, guides readers through the steps of reporting a case and explains the risks and rewards of reporting fraud.

"I'm acting in the role of a lawyer for people who want to know if they have a case," said Hesch, who worked with the Department of Justice's Fraud Section for more than 15 years before taking his job a year and a half ago at Liberty.

"About half of the fraud cases come from whistleblowers," he said, adding that even audits aren't designed to find fraud. "So you really need the jumpstart of a whistleblower."

Plus, Hesch said, the government pays the whistleblower, on average, 20 percent of returned money. The average reward comes to \$1.75 mil-

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lion.

"The larger the case, the larger the reward," said Hesch, who helped oversee cases resulting in more than \$2 billion in rewards.

Officials don't mind the cost, he said, because if not for the whistleblower, they might not know about the fraud. Plus, the publicity from such cases reminds companies to play by the rules.

The Department of Justice's Whistleblower Reward Program has encouraged similar state programs in 20 states, including Virginia. Also, the Internal Revenue Service has a new reward program for reporting tax evasion. Hesch describes both of those options in his book.

From his experience with the Department of Justice, Hesch estimates that 10 percent of all Medicare and military claims are fraudulent. That would add up to \$150 billion year, he said, or \$500 in taxes for each American.

"It hits us in our pocketbooks," he said.

But many people who want to put a stop to fraud don't know about the government programs, Hesch said, which is one of the main reasons he wanted to write the book. Those who do know about the programs usually aren't familiar with the complexities of the process, he said.

"There are some risks that people need to be aware of," he said, such as knowing whether someone who reports fraud can remain anonymous.

"I want to put a stop to the fraud, but I also want to help whistleblowers receive their fair share."

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