



NEWS

From the Office of New York State Comptroller
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JOINT INVESTIGATION OF OTDA LEADS TO IMPROVEMENTS IN CONTRACT PROCESS

A joint investigation by State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli's Office and New York State Inspector General Joseph Fisch found no evidence to support allegations of preferential treatment in the awarding of state contracts by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

A medical services consulting company alleged that OTDA showed favoritism towards another company in the awarding of contracts for consultative examinations for determining medical eligibility of applicants applying for Social Security disability benefits. The State Inspector General and the Comptroller's Inspector General determined the allegations were unfounded but did make recommendations to improve OTDA's contract approval process.

"All businesses should have an opportunity to compete for state contracts in a fair and open process," DiNapoli said. "When allegations arise of favoritism in the contracting process, we take them very seriously. Our office will continue to work with Inspector General Fisch and his staff to ensure that all companies are given equal treatment."

"Public confidence is of the utmost importance in awarding state contracts," Inspector General Joseph Fisch said. "Our joint investigation with Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli has been productive in generating improvements in that process."

OTDA agreed to take the following actions:

- Develop new methods for assessing a bidder's capability to meet staffing requirements to ensure both accuracy and truthfulness of information provided during the bidding process;
- Modify the contracting process to increase competition; and
- Require physicians to sign forms establishing their willingness and qualifications to provide services. Only original and newly executed forms will be accepted.

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