WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §15A-13-1

§15A-13-1. Office created; appointment of Inspector General.

(a) There is hereby created the Office of the Inspector General as a separate and independent operating agency within the department.

(b) The Office of the Inspector General shall be headed by the Inspector General.

(c) The Inspector General shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

(d) The term of the Inspector General is five years.

(e) At the end of a term, an Inspector General shall be eligible for reappointment by the Governor, subject to confirmation as required by the provisions of subsection (c) of this section. The Inspector General may continue to serve until a successor is appointed if he or she is not reappointed.

(f) If a vacancy occurs in the position, an interim Inspector General may be appointed as successor to serve until a successor is appointed.

(g) The Inspector General may be removed by the Governor during his or her term only for:

(1) Malfeasance or gross misfeasance in office;

(2) Persistent failure to perform the duties of the office; or

(3) Conduct prejudicial to the proper administration of justice.

(h) The Inspector General shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation and shall be professionally qualified through experience or education in at least two of the following areas:

(1) The practice of law;

(2) Auditing;

(3) Government operations;

(4) Financial analysis;

(5) Management analysis;

(6) Public administration; or

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(7) Fraud investigation.

(i) The Inspector General shall be paid an annual salary not to exceed $95,000.

(j) The Inspector General:

(1) Shall perform inspections, evaluations, and reviews, and provide quality control for all investigations within the department, and supervise all personnel of the Office of the Inspector General;

(2) Shall investigate fraud, waste, abuse of departmental funds, and behavior in the department that threatens public safety or demonstrates negligence, incompetence, misfeasance, or malfeasance;

(3) Shall cooperate with and coordinate investigative efforts with law enforcement, and where a preliminary investigation establishes a sufficient basis to warrant referral, shall refer such matters to the appropriate prosecuting attorney or the appropriate federal law-enforcement agency; and

(4) May subpoena any person or evidence, administer oaths, take and certify affidavits, and take depositions and other testimony for the purpose of investigating fraud, waste, abuse of departmental funds, or behavior in the department that threatens public safety or demonstrates negligence, incompetence, or malfeasance.

(A) If a person fails to comply with a lawful order or subpoena issued under this subsection, on petition of the Inspector General or a designated Assistant Inspector General, a court of competent jurisdiction may compel:

(i) Compliance with the order or subpoena; or

(ii) Testimony or the production of evidence.

(k) If the Office of the Inspector General is unable to investigate a complaint or allegation because of a conflict of interest, the Office of the Inspector General shall refer the complaint or allegation to the Attorney General for referral to another investigative entity.

(l) Neither the Governor, the secretary, nor any other person, may impede, interfere, or inhibit the Inspector General from initiating, conducting, or completing any investigation, inspection, evaluation, review, or other activity regarding oversight of any investigation conducted by the Office of the Inspector General.

(m) The position of the Inspector General shall be governed by the classified-exempt service provisions in §29-6-4 of this code: *Provided*, That, any employees of the Office of the Inspector General shall be governed by the classified service provisions of §29-6-1 *et seq*. of this code and rules promulgated thereunder.

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(n) The Inspector General may employ such professional personnel, investigators, and other personnel, including certified law-enforcement officers, necessary for the proper administration of the office.

(o) The Inspector General may delegate duties to other employees or obtain services through contract, but the Inspector General is responsible for all official tasks so delegated.

(p) The Inspector General shall propose legislative and procedural rules in accordance with the provisions of chapter 29A of this code in order to implement provisions of this section and to carry out the duties prescribed therein. The Inspector General may promulgate emergency rules pursuant to §29A-3-15 of this code to effectuate the purposes of this section.

(q) Reports of investigations are confidential and shall be provided under seal to the Governor, the secretary, and the Joint Committee on Government and Finance on a quarterly basis.

(r) Reports and documents relating to active investigations involving possible criminal conduct are confidential and are not subject to the provisions of 29B-1-1 *et seq*.

(s) All agencies and boards listed in §5F-2-1(i) of this code shall keep posted in any physical office space, when applicable and in a conspicuous place on their website as required by §5F-1-7 of this code, the office contact information of the Inspector General, including office location and mailing address, telephone number, facsimile number, office hours, and a secure electronic means of contacting the office such as a contact portal or other interface.

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