

# Gov. Walker: Fraud prevention efforts reach record-high savings for taxpayers

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**Contact:** Tom Evenson  
[\(608\) 266-2839](tel:(608)266-2839)

Madison, Wisconsin - Governor Scott Walker visited Brown County Human Services in Green Bay, and Racine County Human Services in Sturtevant today to highlight the strong efforts of state and local agency fraud prevention and investigation staff to protect the integrity of Wisconsin's public assistance programs, including Medicaid and FoodShare. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), created by Governor Walker in 2011, released its [2016 Annual Report](#) today, which shows fraud prevention and detection savings, including overpayments established and cost avoidance topped \$150 million since the creation of OIG, including a record \$51 million in 2016 alone.

"Public assistance programs are an important safety net for those who need them," said Governor Walker. "The fraud prevention and detection work done by the Office of the Inspector General, along with strong partners at the local level, ensures the integrity of these programs and protects taxpayer dollars."

Shortly after taking office, Governor Walker created the Governor's Commission on Waste, Fraud, and Abuse, and based on recommendations from the committee, Governor Walker created the Department of Health Services' (DHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) in October 2011, to consolidate and improve public assistance program integrity and fraud prevention efforts, and to provide additional staffing resources for recipient fraud detection and prevention. Prior to the OIG, DHS had one person working on recipient fraud in the multi-billion dollar programs

including FoodShare and Medicaid. The Fraud Investigation, Recovery and Enforcement (FIRE) Section in the OIG now has 30 staff, including 23 positions to support Medicaid and FoodShare Program fraud prevention and detection activities.

Successfully detecting and preventing fraud in public assistance programs requires strong partnerships with aggressive local investigators. The county-level fraud prevention is funded in part by increases in the past two state budgets, providing \$1,000,000 annually to ten Fraud Prevention and Investigation Programs (FPIP) consortia and nine tribal agencies. This funds local agency investigators, private investigators, or police investigators. Under these partnerships, investigators processed almost 4,000 complaints submitted to the OIG hotline and web portal.

#### Brown County/Bay Lake Consortium (Brown, Door, Marinette, Oconto, Shawano Counties)

Since 2012, Brown County has established nearly \$7 million in program savings from FoodShare and Medicaid fraud investigations. The Bay Lakes Consortium has saved more than \$10 million. The Brown County Human Services Agency collaborates with the Brown County Sheriff's Department to utilize two deputies to investigate fraud allegations for the five-county fraud consortium. Brown County also enforces a county ordinance prohibiting fraud, identifying more people in the FoodShare program using benefits fraudulently or improperly – leading to suspension – than any of the other nine fraud consortia in the state over the past 5 years.

#### Racine County/Wisconsin Kenosha Racine Partnership (WKRP) Consortium (Kenosha, Racine Counties)

Since 2012, the WKRP Consortium has saved nearly \$10 million dollars due to FoodShare and Medicaid fraud investigations, including more than \$5.5 million in Racine County. Racine County's team strictly enforces a local anti-fraud ordinance and has established a solid relationship with the Racine County District Attorney's Office and local courts to prosecute the most egregious cases of public assistance fraud. Racine County's fraud unit recently had a federal review of fraud policies and processes and was commended for their compliance in all aspects of their FoodShare Program fraud operations.

DHS provides almost \$9 billion in benefits to more than 1.3 million people in Wisconsin annually.



For more information on the OIG's fraud efforts: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/oig/index.htm>.