

**As Introduced**

**136th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2025-2026**

**H. B. No. 960**

**Representative Hiner**

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To amend section 117.103 and to enact section 1  
117.104 of the Revised Code to allow awards for 2  
reports of fraud. 3

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That section 117.103 be amended and section 4  
117.104 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows: 5

**Sec. 117.103.** (A) (1) The auditor of state shall establish 6  
and maintain a system for the reporting of fraud, including 7  
misuse and misappropriation of public money, by any public 8  
office or public official. The system shall allow Ohio residents 9  
and the employees of any public office to make ~~anonymous~~ 10  
complaints through a toll-free telephone number, the auditor of 11  
state's web site, or the United States mail to the auditor of 12  
state's office. The person making the complaint may provide the 13  
complainant's name or remain anonymous. The auditor of state 14  
shall review all complaints in a timely manner. 15

(2) (a) Subject to division (A) (2) (b) of this section, the 16  
auditor of state shall keep a log of all complaints filed under 17  
this section, which is a public record under section 149.43 of 18  
the Revised Code. The log shall include the date the complaint 19  
was received, a general description of the nature of the 20

complaint, the name of the public office or agency with regard 21  
to which the complaint is directed, and a general description of 22  
the status of the review by the auditor of state. If section 23  
149.43 of the Revised Code or another statute provides for an 24  
applicable exemption from the definition of public record for 25  
the information recorded on the log, that information may be 26  
redacted. 27

(b) The auditor shall not log a complaint regarding an 28  
ongoing criminal investigation, but shall log the complaint not 29  
later than thirty days after the investigation is complete. 30

(c) If the auditor of state determines that a report made 31  
under division (A)(1) of this section involves probable fraud or 32  
theft, including misuse and misappropriation of public money by 33  
any public office or public official, the auditor of state shall 34  
promptly notify the prosecuting attorney, director of law, 35  
village solicitor, or similar chief legal officer of the 36  
municipal corporation in whose jurisdiction the probable fraud 37  
or theft occurred, unless the prosecuting attorney, director of 38  
law, village solicitor, or similar chief legal officer of the 39  
municipal corporation is identified in the report as the alleged 40  
perpetrator of the fraud or theft. 41

(B) The auditor of state shall create training material 42  
detailing Ohio's fraud-reporting system and the means of 43  
reporting fraud, waste, and abuse. The department of 44  
administrative services shall provide the auditor of state's 45  
training material to each state employee, statewide elected 46  
official, and member of the general assembly. Such materials 47  
shall be as concise as practicable. The auditor of state shall 48  
provide the training material to employees and elected officials 49  
of a political subdivision. Current employees and elected 50

officials as of ~~the effective date of this amendment~~ October 3, 51  
2023, shall complete the training within ninety days of a date 52  
specified by the auditor of state unless good cause exists for 53  
noncompliance. Each new employee or elected official shall 54  
confirm receipt of this material within thirty days after taking 55  
office or beginning employment. The training shall be required 56  
every four years for each employee or elected official. The 57  
auditor of state shall provide a model form on the auditor of 58  
state's web site to be printed and used by public employees and 59  
elected officials to sign and verify their receipt of material 60  
as required by this section. The auditor of state shall confirm, 61  
when conducting an audit under section 117.11 of the Revised 62  
Code, that public employees and elected officials have been 63  
provided material as required by this division. 64

**Sec. 117.104.** (A) As used in this section: 65

(1) "Misappropriation of public money" and "misuse of 66  
public money" have the same meanings as in section 4113.52 of 67  
the Revised Code. 68

(2) "Fraud" means fraud, theft in office, or the misuse or 69  
misappropriation of public money by any public office or public 70  
official. 71

(3) "Fraud recovery" means a judgment or settlement that 72  
is both of the following: 73

(a) Awarded to a public office or other entity harmed by 74  
fraud; 75

(b) Paid to and collected by the public office or other 76  
entity harmed by fraud. 77

(4) "Prosecutor" means a prosecuting attorney or a city 78  
director of law, village solicitor, or similar chief legal 79

<u>officer of a municipal corporation.</u>	80
<u>(B) A person who satisfies all of the following criteria</u>	81
<u>may be eligible to receive an award for reporting fraud:</u>	82
<u>(1) The person reports fraud to the auditor of state's</u>	83
<u>fraud-reporting system under section 117.103 of the Revised</u>	84
<u>Code.</u>	85
<u>(2) The report of fraud materially contributes to an audit</u>	86
<u>for fraud, an investigation of fraud, the discovery of fraud, or</u>	87
<u>the filing of a civil or criminal action for fraud.</u>	88
<u>(3) The report of fraud results in a fraud recovery.</u>	89
<u>(4) The person who reports fraud is not found liable for</u>	90
<u>or convicted of, and does not plead guilty to or otherwise is</u>	91
<u>found to have participated in, the fraud.</u>	92
<u>(5) The person who reports fraud satisfies any additional</u>	93
<u>eligibility requirements established by the attorney general</u>	94
<u>under division (G) of this section.</u>	95
<u>(C) (1) The attorney general shall determine whether the</u>	96
<u>criteria in division (B) of this section are satisfied. In</u>	97
<u>making this determination, the attorney general may consult with</u>	98
<u>the auditor of state, the prosecutor, the public office or</u>	99
<u>entity harmed by the fraud, or any other appropriate entity.</u>	100
<u>(2) If the attorney general finds that the criteria in</u>	101
<u>division (B) of this section are satisfied, the attorney general</u>	102
<u>shall determine whether or not the person who reported the fraud</u>	103
<u>shall receive an award.</u>	104
<u>(3) Subject to divisions (D) and (E) of this section, if</u>	105
<u>the attorney general determines that the person who reported the</u>	106
<u>fraud shall receive an award, the attorney general shall</u>	107

determine the amount of the award. The amount of the award shall 108  
not exceed ten per cent of the amount of the fraud recovery and 109  
shall be subject to the availability of money in the fraud 110  
reporting fund created by division (F) of this section. The 111  
award shall be paid to the person who reported the fraud from 112  
the fraud reporting fund created by division (F) of this 113  
section. 114

(4) The attorney general's determinations under division 115  
(C) of this section are final and not subject to appeal. 116

(D) No award shall be made under division (C) of this 117  
section that will reduce, redirect, delay, or otherwise 118  
interfere with any of the following: 119

(1) A restitution order; 120

(2) A finding of recovery issued by the auditor of state; 121

(3) The recovery of audit costs, including any costs owed 122  
to the auditor of state; 123

(4) Fines, courts costs, or attorney's fees; 124

(5) Investigation costs. 125

(E) No award shall be made under division (C) of this 126  
section before a public office or other entity harmed by fraud 127  
is fully reimbursed for harm caused by the fraud, unless the 128  
attorney general determines the award will not reduce, redirect, 129  
delay, or otherwise interfere with the public office or other 130  
entity being fully reimbursed for harm caused by the fraud. 131

(F) The fraud reporting fund is created in the state 132  
treasury. The fund shall consist of all money appropriated to 133  
the fund and such other money as may be provided by law. The 134  
attorney general shall use the money in the fund only for the 135

<u>purposes of paying awards to persons who report fraud as</u>	136
<u>described in division (C) (3) of this section.</u>	137
<u>(G) The attorney general may adopt, in accordance with</u>	138
<u>Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, rules establishing eligibility</u>	139
<u>requirements for a person to receive an award for reporting</u>	140
<u>fraud, procedures for determining award amounts for reporting</u>	141
<u>fraud, and standards for protecting the confidentiality of a</u>	142
<u>person reporting fraud.</u>	143
<b>Section 2.</b> That existing section 117.103 of the Revised	144
Code is hereby repealed.	145