



United States Department of the Interior BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
www.blm.gov/ca



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To: All California Employees

From: State Director

Subject: Inappropriate Use of Government Charge Cards and Gift Cards, and Integrity in Coding Time

The responsibility that comes with government employees' ability to use charge cards and record their own time is serious, and there are opportunities for abuse. In California, our goal is to respect the public trust this responsibility represents by maintaining ethical standards of behavior.

Misuse of government charge cards and mis-coding of time are extremely serious matters that continue to be issues within BLM. All BLM employees have an obligation to be vigilant in adhering to the rules and regulations governing use of charge cards and accurately recording time. Furthermore, each of us has a duty to consider public perception of our activities as we go about doing our jobs on a daily basis. *"If an action won't pass the red face test, don't do it"* is a solid mantra for making decisions that may reflect on our conduct as government employees.

California BLM has controls in place that have resulted in our state having a good record in managing charge card use, restricting use of gift cards, and accurately recording time. However, I am keenly aware that the potential for abuse is always present, and I am committed to creating an organizational culture in California that does not tolerate misuse of charge cards or mis-coding of time, intentional or not. Unfortunately, any misconduct reflects poorly on all of us who are part of the organization or unit affected. Rules have been developed to ensure ethical standards are met. For that reason, there are serious consequences, administrative and in some cases criminal, for violating those rules.

Maintaining an organization with high integrity and demonstrated ethical behavior is everyone's responsibility, and in everyone's interest. My goal is to go beyond being good at managing these activities. When employees from other BLM states visit California, it should be clear this is an organization that models high ethical standards. I also hope this is a point of personal pride for all of us.

California BLM has rules and mechanisms in place to ensure that employees and supervisors are making good choices. These include our Charge Card Standard Operating Procedures, regular/random audits and program reviews, Quarterly Charge Card Certifications, and weekly communication to the State Leadership Team.

If you have questions related to use of charge cards and gift cards, coding time, or ethics in general, you should talk to your supervisor. In addition, you can contact: Wilma Kominek, Fiscal and Business Branch Chief at 916-978-4511; Annmarie Carlson, Fire Business Specialist at 916-978-4446; and Federica Lee, Asst. Ethics Officer at 916-978-4468.

Signed by:
James G. Kenna
State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management