



COUNTY COUNSEL  
**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

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May 10, 2018

Re: PRA Request - Assistant Auditor-Controller

To All Interested Parties:

A recent letter submitted to the County regarding the Assistant Auditor-Controller was written under a joint capacity as citizens and employees. The County previously held that this document was exempt from disclosure pursuant to Government Code § 6254(c) (personnel, medical and similar files) and the public interest exemption. However, upon further consideration, the County recognizes that documents submitted by citizens are afforded little protection from public inspection, and there is no exemption under the law that would prohibit disclosure of the substance of the letter. Also, this letter was already posted on a public blogsite. However, the names of the complainants are still being withheld pursuant to Government Code § 6254(k) and the Official Information privilege pertaining to whistleblowers (Evidence Code § 1040).

Sincerely,

Jeffrey S. Blanck  
County Counsel

Enclosure

May 3, 2018

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PERSONNEL DEPT.

To whom it may concern,

As dedicated citizens and employees of the County of Humboldt Auditor-Controller office, we feel we have been left with no other recourse but to make our position of no confidence known. We have lost all trust, faith, and confidence in Assistant Auditor-Controller, Karen Paz Dominguez's ability to lead this department.

Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez has fostered an atmosphere of hostility, retaliation, and bullying. An example of this can be seen by her statements made in the North Coast Journal article, dated April 12, 2018, where Paz Dominguez speaks to personnel issues, specifically power struggles between herself and the Payroll Division as blame for issues within the department. Her lack of leadership, mismanagement, and poor policy decisions has damaged the relationships between employees within the Auditor-Controller department and our relationship with other county offices.

For the past 8 months, we have tried to work with Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez on these and many other issues within our department. However, attempts to address workplace problems with Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez has resulted in retaliation and bullying. We feel that the relationship with Karen Paz Dominguez is irreparable. Her lack of leadership and poor management style has begun to affect retention and recruitment of qualified personnel. Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez has established a pattern and practice of inequitable treatment of department personnel and utilizes bullying-behaviors, threats of disciplinary action and loss of employment as a means to intimidate members. We can no longer tolerate it and are asking for relief.

Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez's inability to resolve problems she has created within the office and with other departments continues to jeopardize the functionality of the department. Issues surrounding hostile communication and division among colleagues are but a few of the problems that affect our ability to provide adequate services for the citizens and employees of the county.

Finally, Assistant Auditor-Controller Paz Dominguez's abuse of power and bullying has resulted in an investigation being conducted by the Human Resources Department regarding allegations of a hostile work environment and bullying while in office. Regardless of the outcome of that investigation, we now ask that the Board of Supervisors intervene on our behalf and take the necessary steps to provide quality leadership and direction at the helm of the County of Humboldt Auditor-Controller office.

Respectfully Submitted,

