Be a Superhero, Fight Fraud!

Many say the measure of a superhero is the quality of their nemeses. As state employees, our super stealthily, ultra-deceptive nemeses are the many types of fraud. Fraud can hide anywhere, waiting patiently for the opportune moment to strike. “We’ve always known we’d eventually be called upon to save the day, and the superhero is a crude, hopeful attempt to talk about how we all might feel on that day of great power, and great responsibility,” said Grant Morrison, comic book writer. Today is that day! The day we mere mortals join forces to become superheroes in the fight against fraud, waste, and abuse of state resources. We have some powerful tools in our utility belt to aid in our efforts. Learn more about how to fight fraud during Fraud Awareness and Prevention week, November 11-17, 2018.

Be vigilant. Take part in fraud prevention training. Discuss and implement basic fraud prevention techniques with your colleagues. Get involved and do your part to protect your agency. The faster you take action, the less likely you are to have fraud in your workplace. “The door is more than it appears. It separates who you are from who you can be. You do not have to walk through it. You can run,” Franklin Richards (Fantastic Four).

Defend your integrity. Your organization’s integrity is a result of its culture. Help your agency promote the values of honesty, transparency, and the honor of public service. “With great power comes great responsibility,” Uncle Ben (Spiderman).

Stay alert. Staying alert can help prevent fraud from happening in the first place. “No matter how many times you save the world, it always manages to get back in jeopardy again,” Mr. Incredible. Evaluate your agency internal controls regularly to make sure they are operating effectively and efficiently. If your ‘Spidey senses’ are tingling, listen to them and check things out.

Respect the code. By adhering to the code of conduct, employees increase effectiveness and reduce opportunities for fraud. According to the 2018 Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, the code of conduct is the anti-fraud control that causes the largest reduction in average loss due to fraud. Everyone can help reinforce their agency’s culture of ethics and accountability. As Ironman says, “Heroes are made by the paths they choose, not the powers they are graced with.”

Use your communication superpowers. Fraud is most often discovered from employee tips. Make sure all employees know how to communicate suspicious behavior based on your agency reporting channels. If you see something suspicious, report it promptly. The sooner a fraud is discovered, the less damage it causes.

Fraud fighting is everyone’s responsibility. We must all take our roles seriously and do our part to ensure the state’s resources are used appropriately. “You’re going to make a difference. A lot of times it won’t be huge, it won’t be visible even. But it will matter just the same,” Commissioner James Gordon (Batman).

Questions?
Contact Joshua Botnen, Internal Control Specialist