

# Update: State worker accused of falsely reporting she had checked on foster children arrested Wednesday

by maya lau

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Update, Wednesday 3:27 p.m.:

Kimberly Deann Lee, 49, surrendered to authorities and was booked into the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison Wednesday. She was released after posting a \$25,000 bond.



Kimberly Deann Lee, 49

State Inspector General Stephen Street said though Lee lived and worked in north Louisiana, she was arrested in Baton Rouge because her false reports were filed electronically at Department of Children and Family Services in the capital city. “Rather than file charges in multiple parishes, it made the most sense to have one case in Baton Rouge, where all the counts could be consolidated,” he said.

Original story:

A Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services case worker who was terminated in June is wanted after being accused of falsifying documents to make it appear she was checking on foster care children when she was not.

Kimberly Deann Lee, 49, of Calhoun, faces 20 counts of filing false public records and a count of malfeasance in office, according to an arrest warrant filed Feb. 10 by the Office of Inspector General in the 19th Judicial District Court.

The investigation began after an internal probe by DCFS in December 2014 concluded Lee created the false paper trail, DCFS spokeswoman Grace Weber said. The agency turned over its findings to the inspector general, she said.

Lee is expected to surrender this week at the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison, Inspector General Stephen Street said. He said the misconduct isn't linked to the abuse of children, but the forthcoming arrest is significant because there is a potential for abuse or other problems when children are not properly supervised.

Lee, who was hired as a child welfare specialist on Dec. 10, 2012, was given the job of checking on children in state foster care in the Ruston area, according to the warrant. She was required to perform mandatory monthly in-home visits with the children.

At least 20 times between July 31, 2013, and Aug. 15, 2014, Lee used the state computer system to log fake reports, the warrant says. Foster parents in four foster homes confirmed that Lee did not conduct the purported visits, according to the document.

Lee was terminated June 3, Weber said.

"Keeping children safe is the top priority at DCFS. DCFS has zero tolerance for any employee who puts children at risk or purposefully deceives the department by falsifying documents," Weber said.

Katrina Jackson, Lee's attorney, said she could not comment on the case.

In an interview with Inspector General investigators held in Monroe in June, Lee explained her actions by saying she was committed "to getting things done no matter what." She said her supervisors gave her a heavy workload and pressured her to use "buzz words" in her reports, according to the warrant.

"This is the sort of behavior that cannot be tolerated. Matters of child welfare are of the utmost importance, and we will seek to hold people criminally accountable whenever we uncover this kind of misconduct," Street said Monday.

Street said he does not expect more arrests in the immediate future linked to this case.

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