

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

- Finance and Personnel

VICE CHAIR

- Steering and Rules



MILELE A. COGGS
ALDERWOMAN, 6TH DISTRICT

MEMBER

- Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development
- Library Board
- Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation Board
- Special Joint Committee on the Redevelopment of Abandoned and Foreclosed Homes
- Wisconsin Center District Board

Silence is complicity: If you see something, please say something

Statement of Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs February 2, 2018

For four hours earlier this week, I and my colleagues on the Steering and Rules Committee took testimony and asked questions about the evident mismanagement of the Milwaukee Health Department and its failure to properly notify the families of children found to have elevated levels of lead in their blood.

We discussed work rules, procedures, testing protocols, and, it seemed, everything else under the sun.

In my mind, I kept coming back to the children.

These children probably do not know my name or anyone else's involved in this terrible situation. They do not know the difference between the different types of blood tests used or the different levels of exposure. They are just children who want what my own children and everyone else's want – a chance.

And that is what makes the culture of “see nothing/say nothing” that seems to have been fostered at the Health Department so dangerous.

The city has tried to afford “whistleblowers” protection from retaliation and has tried to provide a path for those who want to come forward with their concerns. Consider the following resources:

**The Fraud, Waste, and Abuse hotline: 414-286-3440 or hotline@milwaukee.gov

**Inappropriate Workplace

Behavior: http://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/User/jkamme/Policies/EmplComplaintForm_New.docx

**The Workplace Grievance Procedure (For Safety Concerns):

<http://city.milwaukee.gov/der/csc/WSGP#.WnOT1XdG1iU>

We will soon move to prohibit any city work rule that would punish or prohibit whistleblowing.

None of these will be effective if unused. Silence is too often complicity and, if we have learned nothing else from this situation, it can have awful consequences.

Please: See something, say something.

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