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## NJ ATTORNEY GENERAL'S 23 DOUBLE-DIPPERS POCKET MILLIONS; MOST 'RETIRE' FOR ONE DAY, THEN COLLECT PENSIONS FOR LIFE — Investigative Report by Mark Lagerkvist

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Edgar J. Hess "retired" as a New Jersey State Police captain at age 50, but he never left the Attorney General's payroll. [The next day](#), he began work at a state unit that investigates corruption.

Without really retiring, Hess has collected [\\$712,000 in state pension checks](#) since 2002. He currently gets \$196,000 a year – an [\\$80,000 pension](#) plus a [\\$116,000 salary](#) as a lieutenant state investigator.

Hess is one of 23 double-dipping investigators and supervisors who work for Attorney General Paula T. Dow and her Division of Criminal Justice, a New Jersey Watchdog investigation revealed. In addition to their salaries, they draw pensions as retired employees of the Attorney General. Most retired for only one day.

Collectively, the 23 "retirees" receive \$3.77 million a year – \$1.56 million a year in pension pay plus \$2.21 million in state salaries. On average, they each pocket \$164,000 a year – \$96,000 in salary and nearly \$68,000 from pension. (See [chart below for names and exact numbers.](#)) The Attorney General's office did not respond to New Jersey Watchdog's request for comment.

The retirement schemes are typically inside jobs – deals that quietly slip through loopholes in pension law. Like Hess, retirees are rehired so quickly they never miss a payday from the Attorney General, who is in charge of both DCJ and State Police. It happens so often that state authorities have a name for it: "Resignation Pickup." The practice has existed since at least the 1980s, state records show.

"A Resignation Pickup takes place when an employee who has officially separated from one appointing authority's jurisdiction is 're-employed' by another authority before any break in service occurs," [explained a New Jersey Civil Service Commission official](#). "This means that the effective date of the pickup cannot exceed the separation date by more than one day."

So Lt. State Investigator Hess' pension jackpot is just business as usual in Trenton. Here are examples of other notable double-dippers in the Attorney General's upper echelon, according to state records:

- Chief of Detectives Paul S. Morris collars nearly \$196,000 a year – almost [\\$115,000 in salary](#) plus a [pension of more than \\$81,000](#). On Aug. 31, 2006, Morris retired as a State Police lieutenant at age 50, then [hired by DCJ the next day](#). So far, he has arrested [\\$416,000 in pension pay](#).
- Supervising Investigator Nicholas J. Zichello nabs about \$187,000 a year – nearly [\\$100,000 in salary](#) plus an [\\$87,000 pension](#). On Jan. 31, 2005, Zichello retired as a State Police captain at age 54, then [hired by the Attorney General's office the next day](#). Since then, he has bagged [\\$581,000 in retirement pay](#).
- Lt. State Investigator Edward P. Quirk snares \$181,000 a year – [\\$69,000 in retirement pay](#) plus his [\\$112,000 salary](#). On Sept. 30, 2000, Quirk retired as a State Police lieutenant at age 49, then [hired by DCJ the next day](#). He has cashed [\\$725,000 in state pension checks](#).

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In 19 instances, officers were hired at DCJ after retiring from the State Police. Three investigators retired from DCJ jobs, then returned to the same division. One officer was hired by the Office of Attorney General following his retirement from the State Police.

The quickie retirements appear to defy state pension rules. A retirement is only "bona fide" if "there is a good faith action to retire" and if "the employer/employee relationship is completely severed," including "a cessation of employment of at least 30 days," according to the [State Police Retirement System](#) and [Police & Firemen's Retirement System](#) handbooks.

But in the 23 double-dipping cases examined by New Jersey Watchdog:

- 14 officers were rehired the day after they retired.
- Two others were rehired within a week of retirement.
- Only seven left the payroll for at least 30 days.

If a retirement is not "bona fide," the employee is "required to reimburse the retirement system for the amount of any retirement benefits," and "there is no limitation on the amount of reimbursement" under pension rules.

Despite existing rules, the Attorney General's double-dippers are unlikely to give up their dual checks or repay millions to state pension funds. That's because the Attorney General and pension boards advised by the Attorney General play key roles in interpreting and enforcing pension laws in New Jersey.

Double-dipping abuses were all but ignored in Gov. Chris Christie's pension overhaul earlier this year, which the governor called his "biggest governmental victory." The new laws do little to stop public employees from simultaneously collecting salaries plus retirement pay.

Meanwhile, New Jersey faces a staggering deficit in its pension funds. State Treasury officials [estimate the shortfall at \\$36 billion](#). In contrast, other actuaries contend New Jersey's pension funds may be [underfunded by more than \\$144 billion](#).

Systemic double-dipping by public officials is the focus of a series of ongoing New Jersey Watchdog investigations.

[Last month](#), New Jersey Watchdog exposed triple-dipping by Christie's budget adviser and cabinet secretary. During the past nine years, Louis C. Goetting IV has raked in \$1.1 million from taxpayers through two severance payouts and an early retirement deal. He now collects \$219,000 a year from the state – a \$130,000 salary plus \$89,000 in pension payments.

[In September](#), New Jersey Watchdog revealed that 44 top county cops – 16 sheriffs and 28 undersheriffs from 20 counties – collect \$3.25 million a year in pensions in addition to their county salaries.

[Last year](#), New Jersey Watchdog found evidence implicating Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, Christie's second-in-command, in an alleged scam that cost a state pension fund a quarter-million dollars. As Monmouth County sheriff, Guadagno made false statements that enabled a top aide to double-dip. The case is [currently under investigation](#) by the Attorney General.

Now, who will investigate the Attorney General's double-dipping investigators?

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**NEW JERSEY WATCHDOG'S LIST OF 23 DOUBLE-DIPPING ATTORNEY GENERAL'S INVESTIGATORS**

Last	First	Total/Yr	Salary/Yr	Pension/Yr	Length of "Retirement"
Hess	Edgar	\$ 196,288	\$ 116,128	\$ 80,160	1 day
Morris	Paul	\$ 195,779	\$ 114,647	\$ 81,132	1 day
Zichello	Nicholas	\$ 186,570	\$ 99,618	\$ 86,952	1 day
Quirk	Edward	\$ 181,573	\$ 112,249	\$ 69,324	1 day
Smith	John	\$ 172,149	\$ 95,037	\$ 77,112	1 day
Weidman	Frederick	\$ 171,886	\$ 101,446	\$ 70,440	1 day
Salzmann	David	\$ 170,298	\$ 97,458	\$ 72,840	11 mos 2 wks
Lane	Richard	\$ 170,052	\$ 84,684	\$ 85,368	1 day
Mai	Mark	\$ 168,347	\$ 97,139	\$ 71,208	2 yrs 6 mos
Loufik	Richard	\$ 165,257	\$ 87,581	\$ 77,676	1 day
Kendig	Patrick	\$ 165,130	\$ 100,810	\$ 64,320	5 mos 2 wks
Drummond	Alan	\$ 164,722	\$ 100,810	\$ 63,912	1 day
Saiia	Joseph	\$ 163,934	\$ 78,890	\$ 85,044	6 days
Macciocca	Donald	\$ 161,489	\$ 87,581	\$ 73,908	1 day
Rozwadowski	Ronald	\$ 161,170	\$ 100,810	\$ 60,360	1 day
Kent	Robert	\$ 159,874	\$ 100,810	\$ 59,064	5 days
Davis	William	\$ 159,161	\$ 87,581	\$ 71,580	1 day
Carlin	Richard	\$ 157,990	\$ 100,810	\$ 57,180	3 yrs
Royle	Michael	\$ 153,601	\$ 89,533	\$ 64,068	1 day



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Sheeran	John	\$ 145,337	\$ 87,581	\$ 57,756	1 day
Saunders	William	\$ 143,689	\$ 92,917	\$ 50,772	2 mos 20 days
Bacsik	Kenneth	\$ 138,625	\$ 89,533	\$ 49,092	2 yrs 4 mos
Crescenz	Charles	\$ 122,785	\$ 89,533	\$ 33,252	7 yrs 4 mos
TOTAL		\$3,775,706	\$2,213,186	\$1,562,520	
AVERAGE		\$ 164,161	\$ 96,225	\$ 67,953	

New Jersey Watchdog's research focused on current employees of the New Jersey Office of Attorney General and Division of Criminal Justice who draw state pensions while collecting salaries exceeding \$75,000 a year. Data are from pension, payroll and personnel records obtained from the New Jersey Department of Treasury and New Jersey Civil Service Commission under the state Open Public Records Act. It was supplemented with information from governmental databases. Pension and salary amounts are current as of December 2011.

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