



Richmond Office of the City Auditor

Office of the Inspector General

Fighting government waste, fraud and abuse

February 21, 2018

Mrs. Selena Cuffee-Glenn – Chief Administrative Officer
City of Richmond

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has completed an investigation within the Department of Public Utilities (DPU). This report, presents the results of the investigation.

Legal & City Policy Requirements:

1. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, §15.2-2511.2, the City Auditor is required to investigate all allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse. Also, City Code section 2-231 requires the Office of the Inspector General to conduct investigations of alleged wrongdoing. In addition, during this investigation the investigator referred to the following regulation:
2. Administrative Regulations 1.6 (AR 1.6), Business Conduct.

Allegation:

The Office of the Inspector General received a complaint alleging a General Supervisor in DPU abused their authority by allowing DPU employees including themselves to leave training early and not attend all required classes. The complaint also alleges the General Supervisor purchased fake gold seals and affixed them to the training certificates.

Findings:

The General Supervisor along with six DPU employees attended a four-day training conference in Pennsylvania in August 2016. The training consisted of eight classes. Upon completion of each class, the monitor stamps the training booklet to reflect their attendance. Once the booklet is stamped with all eight classes, the individuals attending training obtain the perfect attendance gold seal, which is affixed to the attendance certificate.

During the interview, the investigator asked the subject employee if they stayed for the entire training. Initially, the subject employee denied leaving training early. However, after prodding further and after showing the subject employee the authentic and the fake seals, they admitted leaving training early. The subject employee stated they did not do anything wrong by leaving early and getting the employees back to Richmond at a decent hour since in 2013 they returned to Richmond after 9 pm. The subject also stated they have a hard time being a supervisor and was trying to build rapport with the staff.

The investigator questioned the subject employee about the booklets being stamped even though they did not stay until training ended. According to the subject employee

each individual employee gave their booklets to the monitor to be stamped. However, the investigator found the subject employee collected the booklets and had them stamped by the monitor.

The subject employee accepted responsibility as a supervisor to ensure they stayed for the entire course. The subject employee acknowledged they made a bad decision in leaving early.

The Investigator obtained a copy of the perfect attendance gold seal from the vendor that sponsored the training and noted the seal has the vendor's initials. The investigator reviewed the 2015 through 2017 attendance certificates of the City employees who attended this training and noted the 2016 seal affixed to the certificates was different than the 2015 and 2017 seals. The images below depict the vendor's authentic seal and the fake seal that was affixed to the 2016 training certificates.



Authentic



Fake

The investigator asked the subject employee about the gold seal affixed to the 2016 certificates. The subject employee admitted to collecting the certificates in order to place the gold seal on them. The subject employee stated they purchased the gold seals online upon returning to Richmond and placed them on the certificates.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings, the OIG concludes that the facts within the allegation are substantiated. The OIG recommends appropriate disciplinary actions be taken in regards to this matter in consultation with Human Resources. If you have any questions, please contact me at extension 5640.

Sincerely,

Louis G. Lassiter

Louis G. Lassiter, CPA
City Auditor/Inspector General

cc: Robert Steidel, DCAO, Operations
Rosemary Green, Interim Director, DPU
Honorable City Council Members
City Audit Committee