



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Inspector General

July 8, 2025

Mr. Odie Donald II
Chief Administrative Officer
City of Richmond

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has completed an investigation within the Department of Social Services (DSS). This report presents the results of the investigation.

Authority:

1. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2511.2, the Inspector General is required to investigate all allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse.
2. City of Richmond Code 2-214 authorizes the Office of the Inspector General to conduct criminal, civil, and administrative investigations related to the municipal affairs of the city.

Background:

The investigation involves an employee in the Department of Social Services (DSS) who allegedly accessed a citizen's personal information without authorization.

Allegations:

1. A Department of Social Services Benefits Program Support Specialist allegedly committed abuse when they accessed a citizen's information and shared the information with an outside source.

Facts:

On February 14, 2025, the OIG received a complaint from a concerned citizen via the Fraud Online portal. The complainant stated that an employee with the Department of Social Services accessed their case file information and shared the findings with an individual outside of the department.

The OIG investigator spoke with the complainant on February 14, 2025, and was informed that on January 15, 2025, between 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm, they visited the Department of Social Services to recertify SNAP Benefits. According to the complainant, there was an issue with her address; they spoke with someone, left, and then returned to speak with a supervisor. The supervisor escalated the request and gave the complainant a list of food banks, which were, at the time, closed. During the visit, the complainant briefly saw a

female acquaintance employed with DSS getting on the elevator. On February 12, 2025, around 6:30 pm, a sibling of the female acquaintance contacted the complainant by phone.

The complainant stated the phone call began as a sincere call to check on her; However, it quickly transitioned to back-and-forth insults from both parties, as the sibling of the acquaintance began mentioning things that happened during the complainant's visit to social services. The sibling of the acquaintance tried to use themselves as an example, stating that they understand the need for assistance and visiting food banks. The sibling of the work acquaintance also mentioned the complainant's current address, to which, out of fear, the complainant replied that they no longer lived at the address. The complainant stated they had not communicated with the male acquaintance since September 2024, when they talked briefly about an issue involving their daughter's father. The complainant advised they had a childish disagreement between 2017 and 2018, and the three individuals have had no problems since then.

Analysis:

- 1) Va. Code §15.2-2511.2 states, "Abuse" means the excessive or improper use of something or the employment of something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use; the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of resources owned or operated by the locality, or extravagant or excessive use to abuse one's position or authority.
- 2) City of Richmond Administrative Regulation 1.8 Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Policy: Section III. Policy—A position of trust has been conferred upon every authorized person who, as part of their job function, comes in contact with confidential information to keep this information secure and private. Both City employees and contractors are obligated to recognize and adhere to these responsibilities while on or off the job. Therefore, an employee of the City or a person authorized to access City data files and information is required;
 - a. To follow the City's privacy and security policies, standards, and guidelines, including the Electronic Information Security Administration Regulation;
 - b. Not to expose customers' or employees' confidential information (such as social security number, driver's license number, and credit card data or account information;
 - c. Not to engage in or permit unauthorized use of any information in files or programs maintained by the City;
 - d. Not to seek to benefit personally or permit others to benefit personally through the release of confidential information which as come to him/her by virtue of their job function or assignment;

The OIG investigator interviewed the subject of the complaint. During the interview, the subject denied any misuse or unauthorized access to clients' confidential information.

The investigator examined the employee's phone and email communications, in addition to an audit of the Virginia Case Management and SPIDeR Systems completed by the Virginia Department of Social Services, which yielded no evidence to support that the Benefit Program Support Specialist accessed or attempted to access the complainant's information, therefore not constituting abuse.

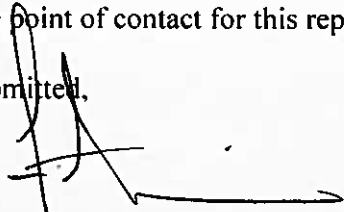
Allegation No. 1 is **Unsubstantiated**.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings, the Office of the Inspector General concludes that this allegation is unsubstantiated.

The point of contact for this report can be reached at extension 1840.

Submitted,



Foster Curtiss
Interim Inspector General

CC: Honorable Members of City Council