

City of Richmond Office of the Inspector General: Investigative Report

OIG CASE #: 27-0004-I
INSPECTOR GENERAL FOSTER CURTISS

Executive Summary

The City of Richmond (COR) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) initiated an investigation on July 1, 2026, after receiving a complaint from an anonymous citizen alleging that a COR marked truck almost backed into the complainant and their family in the parking lot of Kroger Marketplace located at 7000 Tim Price Way. It was further alleged that following the vehicle incident with the complainant, the COR employee drove the marked truck to the Virginia ABC liquor store located at 201 Stonebridge Plaza Ave, Richmond, VA 23225. The employee then exited the city-owned vehicle, entered the Virginia ABC store, and made liquor purchases while on the clock and performing official duties.

Background

On July 1, 2026, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint from a citizen alleging that a COR marked truck almost backed into the complainant and their family as they exited a Kroger Marketplace located at 7000 Tim Price Way. It was further alleged that following the incident with the complainant, the COR marked truck drove to the Virginia ABC liquor store located within the same shopping center.

The OIG obtained and reviewed documentation provided by the complainant, COR vehicle data, footage provided by Virginia ABC Bureau of Law Enforcement, and city policies. City vehicle data along with store footage confirmed the identity of the SUBJECT as a Department of Public Works (DPW) employee. The footage shows the SUBJECT enter the ABC store at 2:16 PM and purchase two 375ml bottles of whiskey with their card via contactless payment at approximately 2:17 PM. The SUBJECT then exited the store and departed in the city vehicle. An electronic receipt of the transaction was also requested, confirming the identity of the SUBJECT, the time of the purchase, and the type and amount of liquor purchased. Additionally, the submitted timecard placed the SUBJECT in a working capacity while at the ABC store during their approved working hours on July 1, 2026.

The OIG interviewed the SUBJECT. Throughout the entirety of the interview the SUBJECT was honest and forthcoming of all events. During the interview, the SUBJECT stated that, on the day of the incident, their shift ended at 2:30 PM. They acknowledged entering the ABC store and purchasing alcohol prior to their shift ending and transporting the alcohol in a city vehicle to their place of residence. The SUBJECT stated they unknowingly violated city policies.

COR Administrative Regulation 4053: Substance Abuse Policy (AR 4053)

The purpose of [AR 4053](#) is to establish and maintain a safe and healthy workplace that is free from alcohol abuse and illegal drug use for its employees and to protect the safety of its citizens by providing the highest quality of services. Section II of this policy states that the possession of alcohol is prohibited in the workplace. It further clarifies that “This prohibition is inclusive of all breaks and meals, without regard to whether the break/meal is taken in or outside of the workplace.”

Department of Public Works Fleet Management City Policies and Procedures

The Department of Public Works Fleet Management City Policies and Procedures serves as a manual for citywide understanding and execution of policies and procedures regarding the use of the COR vehicle and equipment fleet under the care of Fleet Management. Section 3.II.B states that “Operators shall use fleet vehicles for official city business only. Operators guilty of misuse are subject to disciplinary action by their agency and may lose their privilege to operate a fleet vehicle. Vehicles are to be operated in a manner that avoids even the appearance of impropriety.” Section 3.II.H prohibits the transportation of alcoholic beverages in a city vehicle. The only exception to this policy is law enforcement personnel in the execution of their official duties.

Allegations and Findings

Allegation (COR/OIG): A report or claim of potential fraud, waste, or abuse involving the COR. Allegations may be **received** by **OIG** from the public, the COR employees, contractors, or other sources, or **initiated** by **OIG** through proactive reviews.

Classification after OIG inquiry/investigation:

- **Substantiated:** Evidence meets the applicable standard of proof (e.g., **preponderance of the evidence**) and indicates the alleged conduct likely occurred.
- **Unsubstantiated:** Evidence does **not** meet that standard. This classification does **not** state the claim is false; it reflects insufficient evidence to prove it.

Note: “Preponderance of the evidence” means **more likely than not**. If OIG policy uses additional outcomes (e.g., **partially substantiated, inconclusive**), those may be applied as appropriate.

- **Administrative Regulation 4053**
 - The SUBJECT allegedly possessed alcohol in their workplace in violation of COR Administrative Regulation 4053: Substance Abuse Policy. The SUBJECT, a Department of Public Works (DPW) employee, purchased liquor from a Virginia ABC store at approximately 2:17 PM and reported working until 2:30 PM. Based on the investigative findings, the OIG determined that the allegation that the SUBJECT was in possession of alcohol in the workplace is **substantiated**.
- **Department of Public Works Fleet Management City Policies and Procedures**
 - The SUBJECT allegedly transported alcoholic beverages in a city vehicle in violation of Department of Public Works Fleet Management City Policies and Procedures. After purchasing alcohol, the SUBJECT was seen on ABC store security footage entering the marked truck and driving away. Based on the investigative findings, the OIG determined the allegation that the SUBJECT transported alcoholic beverages in a city vehicle is **substantiated**.

Recommendations

The investigation identified concerns related to the use of city vehicles within the department. Additionally, it was noted that staff reported limited awareness of the policies governing the possession and transportation of alcohol while operating or riding in city vehicles.

It is recommended that the Department of Public Works provide department-wide training on policies governing authorized and unauthorized use of city vehicles, as well as the requirements related to the possession and transportation of alcohol. The department should maintain documentation of completed training, including signed statements of understanding from participating employees, to ensure consistent application of policy expectations.

The Office of Inspector General recommends that Departmental Supervisors consult with the COR Human Resources department to determine the appropriate disciplinary action for the SUBJECT involved, in accordance with applicable city policies and procedures.

Foster Curtiss

Foster Curtiss, Inspector General