

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

CITY OF BALTIMORE



Isabel Mercedes Cumming
Inspector General

Investigative Report Synopsis

OIG Case # 20-0019-I

Issued: May 13, 2020



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General
City Hall, Suite 635
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202



May 13, 2020

Dear Citizens of Baltimore City,

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint related to irregular billing practices by the Municipal Telephone Exchange (MTE). During the investigation, the OIG found billing concerns that required immediate attention and issued a Management Alert (Alert).

The Mission of the OIG is to promote accountability, efficiency, and integrity in City government, as well as to investigate complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse. On March 2, 2020, the OIG discovered a spreadsheet listing Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) lines that were believed to be inactive yet still being billed to various City agencies. The OIG analyzed the VOIP spreadsheet and originally determined 240 of the VOIP lines that were billed were inactive, however City agencies continued to be billed for the lines.

An Alert was sent to the Director of Finance and the Comptroller to outline the findings. The Comptroller presented the OIG with a detailed response which is attached. The Comptroller corrected the number of inactive lines from 240 to 203. The OIG then directly contacted all Agencies involved and verified 204 lines should be terminated. The final finding was that from September 2017 through February 2020 various City agencies have paid approximately \$108,451.80 for the 204 VOIP lines that Agencies reported they were not using.

It was also noted by the OIG one department was billed for lines they no longer had and had specifically requested to be discontinued in February, but billing resumed in March and April for over \$500.00 to that Agency. MTE provided refunds for the Mayor's Office in April after the Alert was issued and it determined they were incorrectly billed in March, however the remaining 16 City agencies accounting for 196 lines did not receive refunds.

The OIG continues to remain transparent to the Citizens of Baltimore City in matters involving their monies.

Sincerely yours,

Isabel Mercedes Cumming
Inspector General

Cc: Hon. Bernard C. "Jack" Young, Mayor of Baltimore City
Hon. Brandon Scott, President, City Council
Hon. Joan M. Pratt, Baltimore City Comptroller
Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council
Hon. Dana P. Moore, Acting City Solicitor

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

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