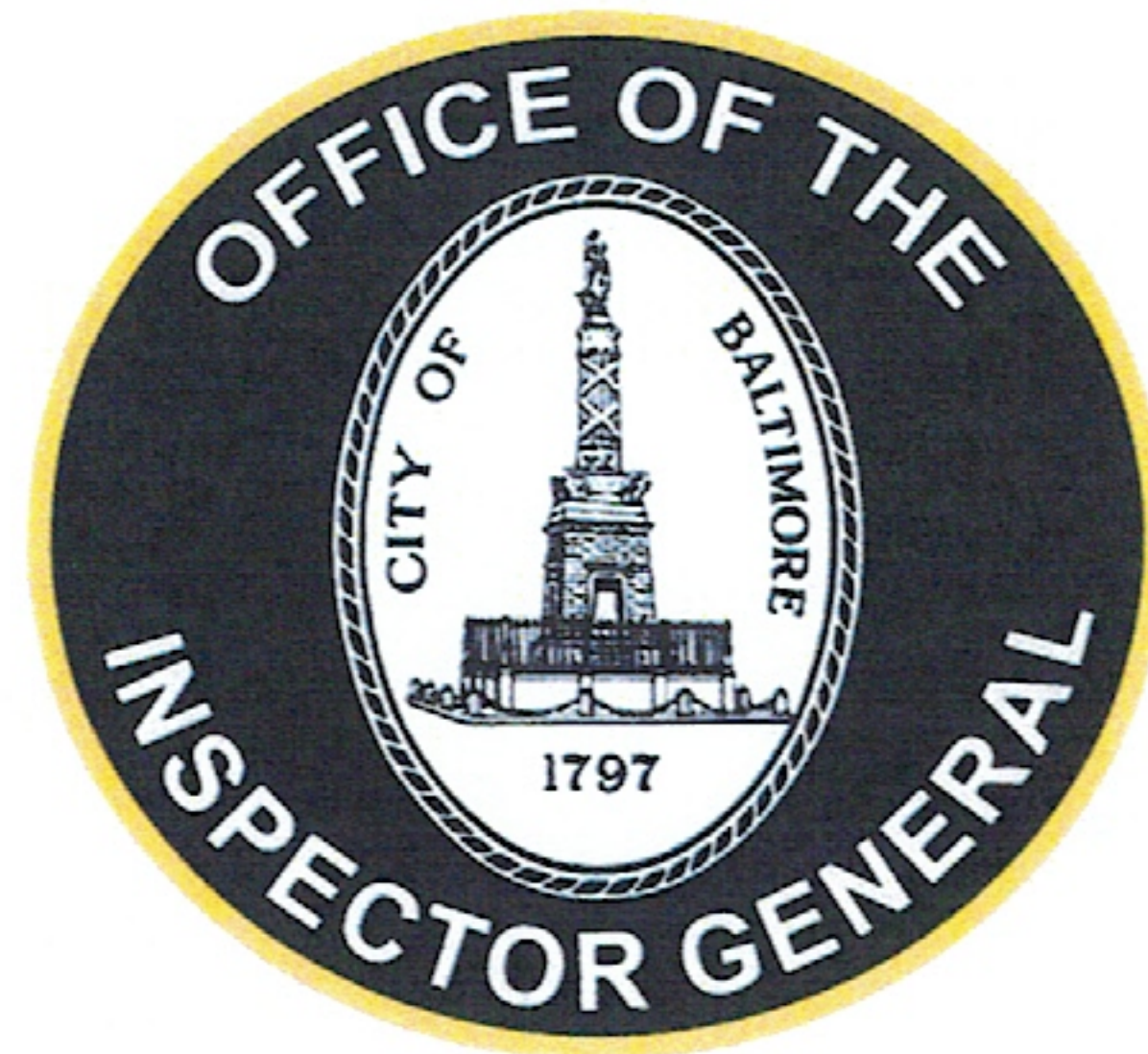


# OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL CITY OF BALTIMORE



**Isabel Mercedes Cumming**  
**Inspector General**

## **Investigative Report Synopsis**

OIG Case # 19-0033-I

Issued: December 18, 2018





December 18, 2018

Dear Citizens of Baltimore City,

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint from the OIG Hotline that a City Official (Official) within a departmental finance office<sup>1</sup>, received double pay for 10 pay periods without reporting the error to the Central Payroll Division (CPD) or an immediate supervisor. The error resulted in a total overpayment of \$34,615.40. Additionally, it was discovered that the Official was not qualified as to education or work experience to hold the position at all.

The mission of the OIG is to promote accountability, efficiency, and integrity in City government, as well as the investigation of complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse in City government. OIG spoke with numerous witnesses and analyzed bank records in the course of the investigation.

### **Overpayment and Non-Reporting**

The OIG investigation revealed that for almost five months, the Official received double his bi-weekly pay. The cause of the overpayment was the fact that when the Official was hired, he was erroneously entered into the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) as both a salaried<sup>2</sup> employee and an hourly<sup>3</sup> employee. OIG learned the Official did not contact CPD until he noticed he was no longer receiving double pay. Once the error was discovered, the Official was informed he had to pay the money back. He eventually agreed to repay the overpayment over a period of 26 pay periods.

When asked to explain to the OIG his knowledge of the overpayment and his failure to correct the error, the Official asserted that he overlooked the excess payments because his checking account automatically transferred any money in excess of \$5,000 to several other accounts<sup>4</sup> based on pre-determined percentages. Bank officials later denied such a feature exists and confirmed that transfers must be manually completed.

The actual facts are clear. The Official received his first live City paycheck of a week's pay on October 13, 2017 for the net amount of \$794.56. The one check was correctly calculated based on his salary for 22 hours of work. On October 27, 2017, he received his first full live paycheck in the net amount of \$4,255, double his bi-weekly rate. The Official deposited this check that day using his Bank's mobile deposit feature. This feature required him to photograph the check, enter

---

<sup>1</sup> This employee was not a member of the Department of Finance but of a finance office in a separate agency.

<sup>2</sup> A salaried employee receives pay based on a salary.

<sup>3</sup> An hourly employee receives pay based on an hourly rate.

<sup>4</sup> He identified savings, brokerage, and mortgage accounts.



the amount of the check, and to verify all the information before the transaction was complete. The Official told the OIG, falsely, that his first few checks were correct and after initiation of direct deposit, he stated he never noticed the extra money partly because he never checks his pay stubs.

Baltimore City Administrative Manual 217-3 states, "All employees are expected to exercise a degree of diligence by monitoring their pay and reporting any discrepancies to the immediate supervisor or agency payroll clerk." The overpayment was discovered by accountants in early March 2018 and his pay was adjusted immediately. The Official finally called CPD after he received a corrected paycheck on March 16, 2018.

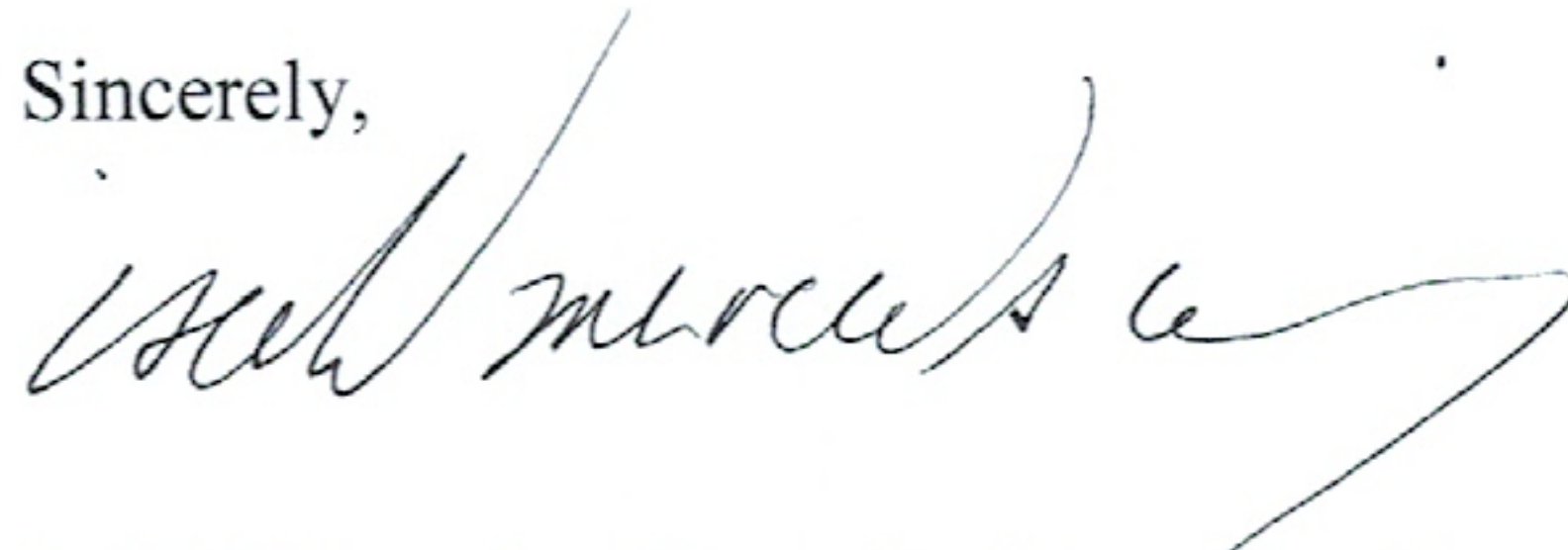
Financial records revealed the Official transferred large amounts of money to his savings account and two brokerage accounts during the period of double pay. The amounts transferred to his savings and brokerage accounts prior to and after to the double payments were notably lower. The OIG also reviewed the Official's historical mortgage payments; those records contradict the Official's assertion that additional payments to his mortgage account were made.

### **Qualifications**

During the initial investigation, concerns were raised regarding the Official's qualifications. Employees questioned the City Official's accounting knowledge and competency. The OIG worked with the Recruitment and Talent Division of DHR to evaluate the Official's educational background in relation to his position. His background and work history did not represent significant experience in accounting or finance as required by the position. The evaluation confirmed that the Official did not satisfy the minimum qualifications of his position.

The OIG has learned the Official is no longer a City employee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isabel Mercedes Cumming', written in a cursive style.

Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General  
Office of the Inspector General

Cc: Hon. Catherine E. Pugh, Mayor of Baltimore City  
Hon. Bernard C. Young, President, City Council  
Hon. Joan M. Pratt, Baltimore City Comptroller  
Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council  
Hon. Andre M. Davis, City Solicitor