

**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
**CITY OF BALTIMORE**



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

**Investigative**  
**Report Synopsis**

OIG Cases # 23-0047-I and 24-0033-I

Issued: April 10, 2024



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
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City Hall, Suite 635  
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April 10, 2024

Dear Citizens of Baltimore City,

The mission of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is to promote accountability, efficiency, and integrity in City government, as well as to investigate complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse. The following synopsis is a condensed version of the full report provided to City management officials and does not contain all investigative information.

The OIG received two anonymous complaints alleging separate violations of City vehicle-use policies in June 2023 and January 2024. The first complaint, initiated in June 2023, alleged that an employee of the Mayor's Office (Employee 1) damaged two Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD) vehicles that Employee 1 was not permitted to operate and failed to comply with the City's policy of undergoing drug and alcohol testing immediately following a City vehicle accident (OIG Case 23-0047-I).

The second complaint, initiated in January 2024, reported that a City vehicle was illegally parked in a parking space reserved for drivers with disability parking placards at a commercial property on Harford Road (OIG Case 24-0033-I).

## **OIG INVESTIGATIONS**

### **Motor Vehicle Accident Policy Violation - OIG Case 23-0047-I**

The OIG confirmed Employee 1 was involved in two City vehicle accidents in May and June 2023 during Employee 1's regular work hours. At the time of the accidents, Employee 1 was operating vehicles loaned to the Mayor's Office by BCFD.

In the May accident, Employee 1 stated they were struck by a driver who ran a stop sign while Employee 1 operated a City-owned Chevy. Regarding the June accident, Employee 1 struck the mirror of a vehicle parked while driving a City-owned Ford, causing damage to both cars. The City vehicle was towed to a garage for repairs, which included fixing a broken window. The City's testing provider, Mercy Medical Center (Mercy), did not have records of Employee 1 undergoing drug and alcohol testing following the May and June accidents.

The Motor Vehicle Accident Policy of the City's Administrative Manual (AM) states that all drivers involved in an accident while operating a City-owned vehicle or performing City work shall immediately undergo a complete drug and alcohol screening. Per the City's Substance Abuse Control Policy, this testing must be completed during normal business hours or after hours at the Mercy emergency room.

Additionally, all City employees must attend Risk Management's Defensive Driver's course to obtain a City of Baltimore Driver Permit/Authorization (CBDP/A). The OIG learned the City's Motor Vehicle Policy and other post-accident requirements are reviewed during the City's Defensive Driver Course. The

#### **REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE**

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*This public synopsis is only a summary of a more comprehensive report of investigation submitted to the appropriate City management official*

OIG confirmed that Employee 1 obtained a valid City driver permit after completing a Defensive Driver Course in 2022. Still, the investigation revealed that Employee 1 appears to have violated the City's Motor Vehicle Accident Policy by failing to comply with the City's policy of reporting to Mercy for drug and alcohol testing following an accident involving a City vehicle.

### **City Vehicle Illegally Parked – OIG Case 24-0033-I**

An anonymous complaint provided evidence of a City vehicle on January 3, 2024, parked in a space reserved for drivers with a disability parking placard at a Harford Road commercial parking lot. The investigation revealed that the vehicle was assigned to a Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) employee (Employee 2) at the time.

Title 21 of the Maryland Code states a person may not stop, stand, or park a vehicle in a space or zone marked as restricted for the use of individuals with disabilities unless an individual with a disability is in the vehicle. Maryland Code also states that an individual is not permitted to park a motor vehicle in a space designated for the use of individuals with disabilities unless a valid permit, issued by an authorized vehicle administration, is displayed by the vehicle operator.

Furthermore, Article 31 of the Baltimore City Code states that “a vehicle without special registration plates for disabled persons or not displaying a disabled person's parking permit issued by the Motor Vehicle Administration may not be stopped in a space or zone marked in accordance with this section as restricted to the use of disabled persons, on private or City-owned property open to the use of the general public.”

Employee 2's actions on January 3, 2024, appear to have violated City and State of Maryland transportation laws. Additionally, Employee 2's City driver permit may be revoked or suspended for any violation of the Maryland State Driver's Handbook, which states that the illegal use of disability parking spaces may result in a citation or fines.

### **Overall Recommendations**

The OIG recommends that agencies provide City driver permit holders with copies of the City Vehicle Policies annually. Scheduled internal agency policy reviews could help refresh employees' recollections of the steps required following an accident or when a vehicle is damaged.

Sincerely,



Isabel Mercedes Cumming  
Inspector General

CC: Hon. Brandon M. Scott, Mayor of Baltimore City  
Hon. Nick Mosby, Baltimore City Council President  
Hon. Bill Henry, Baltimore City Comptroller  
Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council  
Hon. Ebony Thompson, Acting Baltimore City Solicitor

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