

**Mayor's Office of Homeless Services  
Response  
Case # 24-0028-I**



CITY OF BALTIMORE  
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

MEMORANDUM

<b>TO</b>	Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General
<b>FROM</b>	Ernestina Simmons, Executive Director, Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS)
<b>DATE</b>	August 8, 2024 <b>Revised 9/5/2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	ROI 24-0028-I

I have had the opportunity to review the OIG Management alert and appreciate both your time and effort to understand the factors that resulted in our agency remitting payment twice for the same food service to two separate vendors. Over the past several months, I have worked closely with our teams to gain a greater understanding of the contracting process as it relates to sub-recipient contracts, emergency procurement request and vendor contracts. We are committed to improving our systems and process and are focused on ensuring efficient and effective practices that includes collaboration amongst our teams who are responsible for monitoring our sub-recipient providers and contracted vendors and processing monthly invoices.

Please see below for additional updates as it relates to the investigation:

**CONTRACTS**

In April 2020, the City entered a contractual relationship with [REDACTED] via the emergency procurement process to provide 123 rooms as well as meals to ensure the health and safety of men during the pandemic. Throughout this agreement, [REDACTED] was contractually responsible for paying their food vendor and seeking reimbursement through MOHS as they submitted their invoices for rooms and additional items as specified in their contract. ***This contract was approved via the emergency procurement process and assigned to an accountant assistant to process monthly invoices for services rendered.***

In August 2022, the city contracted with [REDACTED] to provide 24-hour supportive services at the men's shelter. This contract was approved through the standardized process that includes approval by MOHS leadership, the approval of the scope of work, budget line items, legal review, audit review and BOE approval. Upon approval, service provider contracts are assigned a program compliance officer who reviews monthly expenditures to ensure eligibility for services rendered under the contact which includes approved budget line items, and an account assistant who processes monthly invoices. ***This contract was approved by a former employee who included food as an eligible line item which resulted in the both the program compliance***

*and fiscal accountant approving the monthly invoices for [REDACTED]. This contract should not have included food services as [REDACTED] was already contracted to provide food services.*

## **SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT**

MOHS remains committed to implementing policies, procedures and practices that ensure effective and efficient practices. As such, we have implemented additional process as it relates to procurement contracts, This includes:

- Prior to submitting any request for vendor contracts, the fiscal administrator or designee will meet with the Program Compliance Supervisor or designee to ensure there is no duplication of services for the requested vendor.
- The Fiscal administrator will conduct monthly meetings with the assigned fiscal staff to ensure timely processing of invoices.
- If applicable, any vendor whose contract includes third party vendors, MOHS will require supporting documentation to support the reimbursement request. MOHS will also require for the vendor to provide proof that they have paid their third-party vendor the amount they have requested from MOHS for the services rendered.

MOHS met with [REDACTED] on July 31, 2024 and August 6, 2024 to discuss the over payment. We continue to have a small outstanding balance with approximately \$100,000 owed to [REDACTED] and have informed them we would not remit any additional payments until they reconcile the account with MOHS. [REDACTED] **is no longer a contracted vendor with MOHS.**

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.