

# OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL CITY OF BALTIMORE



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

## **Investigative Report Synopsis**

**OIG Case # 2018-0818**

**Issued: August 30, 2018**

# CITY OF BALTIMORE

CATHERINE E. PUGH, Mayor



## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

ISABEL MERCEDES CUMMING, Inspector General  
640 City Hall  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

August 30, 2018

Dear Citizens of Baltimore City,

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted an investigation regarding the purchase of cellular telephone for the personal use of an employee, using Baltimore City funds. The complaint alleged the director of the Municipal Telephone Exchange purchased a new Apple iPhone 7 Plus in December of 2017 using City funds.

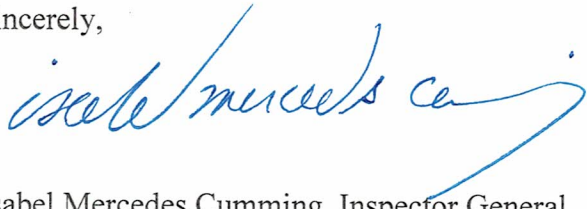
The mission of the OIG is to promote accountability, efficiency, and integrity in City government, as well as the investigation of complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse. The OIG's investigation substantiated the allegations in this case. The OIG confirmed the director had another MTE employee purchase the phone with City funds utilizing a discount Verizon provided to the City, and converted the phone to his personal device. The purchase and use of this phone was for the direct, personal benefit of director and cost the City \$219.99. The phone was purchased at a 32.83% discount through the City, as Apple retailed the same model iPhone for \$669.99.

The OIG reviewed the City's Verizon billing records and located an equipment purchase in December of 2017 for \$219.99. The director had another MTE employee order the phone on his behalf; in this instance he served as both the requestor and approver. The director acknowledged purchasing the phone with City funds, albeit with the intent to reimburse the City the \$219.99. He switched the SIM card from his personal cellular phone into the new iPhone 7 Plus and converted it for personal use. He further acknowledged that he forgot to reimburse the City for the phone in the intervening five months. He subsequently made payment to the Director of Finance in the amount of \$219.99.

The OIG referred the matter to management for any action deemed necessary. In a subsequent response from management, two date errors were noted in the original OIG report. The OIG acknowledged the dates were incorrect. The incorrect dates; however, did not alter the conclusion of the investigation. Management acknowledged poor judgment on the part of the director, but proffered a legitimate business need for the purchase of the phone and did not consider the purchase an abuse of authority. Management did acknowledge the seriousness of the incident and its corresponding inferences. Management also ordered the director to reimburse the necessary amount to account for the retail price of the phone.



Sincerely,



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