

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



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

**Investigative**  
**Report Synopsis**

**OIG Case # 23-0007-I**

**Issued: May 23, 2023**



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



May 23, 2023

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 OIG received a complaint involving a Bureau of Accounting and Payrolls Services (BAPS) employee (BAPS Employee) in August 2022. While other allegations were investigated, this public synopsis will outline only one issue, related to the BAPS Employee's reported educational history.

### **BAPS BACKGROUND**

BAPS is a Department of Finance (DOF) division managing the accounting and payroll operations for the City, including accounts payable, payroll, disbursements, accounts receivable, billing, and revenue control. BAPS staff annually process over one million payments to employees and retirees, totaling approximately \$900 million.

### **INVESTIGATION**

The BAPS Employee began working for the City in June 2021 in a position that required a college degree. The BAPS Employee later applied for two promotional positions, including a managerial position which required a master's degree. On their initial and subsequent applications, the BAPS Employee listed a bachelor's degree from a college in the Baltimore metropolitan area (Local College). On these applications, the BAPS Employee certified that the statement regarding the degree is true, and any false or incomplete answer may be grounds for dismissal after beginning employment.

After applying for the managerial position, the BAPS Employee requested a BAPS Chief (BAPS Chief) and a DOF Human Resources Business Partner accept an updated resume that now included a master's degree from the Local College. The BAPS Employee also included transcripts and a photo of the diploma for the master's degree, which they alleged to have achieved in May 2001.

During their OIG interview, a BAPS Chief stated the BAPS Employee did not have their master's degree when they began working for the City. The BAPS Chief explained that the BAPS Employee said they were previously enrolled in a master's program but had stopped taking classes. According to the BAPS Chief, the BAPS Employee told them that when they later contacted the Local College, the registrar at the Local College informed them that they did graduate, but the degree was never mailed. The BAPS Employee explained to the BAPS Chief that they now had a diploma for the master's degree.

#### **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*

The OIG subpoenaed the Local College to verify the BAPS Employee's master's and bachelor's degrees. The Local College responded that the BAPS Employee never completed a single semester at the Local College, and it had no available transcripts for them.

Based on the Local College's response and the errors on the alleged transcripts, the BAPS Employee's claims of holding two degrees from the Local College were proven false. Moreover, the BAPS Employee misrepresented their education history on City job applications. The BAPS employee is no longer employed with the City.

The OIG recommended DOF coordinate with DHR to ensure education verification checks are completed and appropriately reviewed as part of the hiring process for financial positions with access to sensitive information.

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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