

REPORTING POSSIBLE WRONGDOING TO THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

PURPOSE

The Office of the Inspector General Palm Beach County, Florida, Ordinance contains certain provisions regarding reporting to the Office of Inspector General (OIG). It requires that the Village Manager report certain specified acts or omissions to the Inspector General. It also designated the Inspector General as “an appropriate local official” for purposes of whistleblower reporting and protection under Florida law. Furthermore, it makes it a crime for any person to attempt to retaliate, punish, harass, or penalize anyone for communicating with or cooperating with the Inspector General. This policy explains the procedures for Municipal employees to report possible wrongdoing to the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

UPDATES

Future updates will be the responsibility of the Village Manager in coordination with the Inspector General.

AUTHORITY

The Office of the Inspector General, Palm Beach County, Florida Ordinance Sec. 112.3187 – 112.31895, Florida Statutes.

POLICY

1. Village employees shall promptly notify the OIG and/or their department director of possible:
 - a. Mismanagement of a contract (misuse or loss exceeding \$5,000 in public funds,
 - b. Fraud,
 - c. Theft,
 - d. Bribery, or
 - e. Any other violation of law which appears to fall within the jurisdiction of the Inspector General.

If the matter appears to involve the department director, the employee may promptly report it to the Village Manager. An employee may make his or her report to either the OIG or management orally or in writing. If a department director received such a report from an employee, or otherwise becomes aware of such a situation, the department director shall promptly report the situation in writing to the OIG with a copy to the Village Manager.

2. In addition to the above, an employee may directly report to the OIG any other conduct which may fall within the Inspector General's jurisdiction.
3. Whistle-blower Allegations – In accordance with this Ordinance and the Florida Whistle-blower Act, if a municipal employee reports any of the following directly and in writing to the Inspector General, he or she may be granted "whistle-blower" protection by the Inspector General:
 - a. Any violation or suspected violation of any federal, state, or local law, rule, or regulation committed by an employee or agent of an agency or independent contractor which creates and presents a substantial and specific danger to the public's health, safety, or welfare.
 - b. Any act or suspected act of gross mismanagement, malfeasance, misfeasance, gross waste of public funds, suspected or actual Medicaid fraud or abuse, or gross neglect of duty committed by an employee or agent of an agency or independent contractor.

Employees should note that reporting a matter to the Inspector General pursuant to the Whistle-blower Act does not guarantee the employee "whistle-blower" protection under the Act. That is a determination which will only be made by the Inspector General after evaluation of the complaint.

Methods of Reporting:

The OIG reporting form can be found at: <http://www.pbcgov.com/IOG/rwfa.htm>

An employee can file a report by:

1. Email to the OIG at inspector@pbcgov.org;
2. Fax to the OIG at 561/233-0735;
3. US Mail to the OIG at P.O. Box 16568, West Palm Beach, FL 33416; or
4. OIG Hotline toll free at 877/283-7068 or 561/233-2350.

This policy and procedure shall become effective October 29, 2012.

Karl E. Umberger
Village Manager

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