



**STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF THE WELFARE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD INSPECTOR GENERAL**

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**LETIZIA TAGLIAFIERRO  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

May 4, 2020

RoAnn M. Destito  
Commissioner  
New York State Office of General Services  
41st Floor, Corning Tower  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12242

Re: NYS IG 3688-002-2018

Dear Commissioner Destito:

On October 24, 2018, the Office of the New York State Inspector General received a complaint from an individual who requested anonymity and alleged that on that same day, the complainant observed a party at the former [REDACTED], a bowling alley and food venue located at [REDACTED] in Albany. According to the complainant, the late-day party was "provided by" consulting firm [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for employees of the New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Design and Construction Unit "rewarding the OGS employees for a job well done." Additionally, the complainant alleged possible time and attendance abuse by the OGS employees while attending this party.

The Inspector General investigated this allegation and found that on October 24, 2018, a number of OGS employees attended an event at [REDACTED] that was partially paid for by [REDACTED]. This event was held to celebrate the completion of

a phase of a State project and was attended by several State vendors and certain OGS employees who were involved in the project.

The Inspector General found that a former OGS contract employee, [REDACTED], made a reservation for this event with [REDACTED] using her OGS email account. The reservation, for the period 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on the 24th, was made under the heading "Office of General Services - Team Outing." It was for a private section of [REDACTED], which included the use of four bowling lanes. [REDACTED] testified, however, that the party actually ran from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. [REDACTED] further testified that she collected approximately \$20 from each attendee to cover bowling expenses and attendees paid individually for their own food and drinks.

The investigation found that the October 24, 2018 party was attended by OGS contract employee [REDACTED] and OGS employees [REDACTED] among others. Employees of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] also attended.

At the conclusion of the event, a final balance of \$217.79 was paid using a corporate credit card assigned to [REDACTED].<sup>1</sup> This fee covered the event room, bowling shoe rental, a bar tab, and gratuity. [REDACTED] testified to the Inspector General that although he left the [REDACTED] event before it concluded, he authorized his subordinate to use his [REDACTED] credit card to pay for what he believed were event appetizers and he was unaware that his credit card had been used to pay for other event charges.

The investigation found that O [REDACTED] was a member of the OGS Selection Recommendation Committee that recommended [REDACTED] be awarded multiple term contracts with the State. Notably, these contracts were awarded to [REDACTED] prior to the October 24, 2018 event and there is no evidence that [REDACTED] professional decision making was impacted by her attendance at the [REDACTED] event. Further, [REDACTED] testified to the Inspector General that she paid for her food and drink while attending the event and she also paid [REDACTED] \$20 for her bowling fees at the event.

Regarding the allegation of possible time and attendance abuse by OGS employees while attending this party, the Inspector General found that those OGS personnel who attended the event arrived after their normal work hours. Additionally, [REDACTED] testified that she did not arrive at the party until after 5:00 p.m. Given that [REDACTED] is approximately 8.5 miles from OGS's Empire State Plaza office, where both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] work, any significant time and attendance abuse seems unlikely.

Given the facts above and the potential appearance issues presented under both New York State Public Officers Law section 74 and OGS's Code of Conduct, the

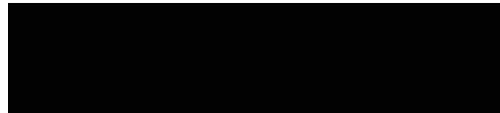
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<sup>1</sup> According to [REDACTED], the total event costs charged to this group tab were \$337.79. [REDACTED] corporate credit card was used to pay \$217.79, and an earlier down payment of \$120 was credited to the tab. The Inspector General was unable to determine who made the \$120 down payment. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] denied having done so.

Inspector General recommends that OGS provide ethics training for its staff and remind staff who are involved with State vendors of their responsibility to analyze, seek guidance, and avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest where appropriate. OGS should further remind its employees to be cautious in their decisions regarding socializing with entities that do business with the State, and that even if no actual conflict of interest exists, the appearance of a conflict of interest may be present.

Please advise me of any action taken by OGS in response to these recommendations. If you require further information, please contact Deputy Inspector General James R. Davis at 518.474.1010.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Inspector General.

Letizia Tagliafierro  
Inspector General

Cc: Bradley G. Allen, Esq.  
Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel