



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

MARGARET GARNETT  
COMMISSIONER

180 MAIDEN LANE  
NEW YORK, NY 10038  
212-825-5900

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**CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI**  
**(212) 825-5931**

### **DOI ISSUES REPORT ON PROBE INTO MISUSE OF THE MAYOR'S SECURITY DETAIL**

Margaret Garnett, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued a report today on three allegations involving the misuse of the Mayor's security detail and a fourth allegation DOI probed on whether the Mayor's presidential campaign repaid the City of New York the costs associated with the travel of the Mayor's security detail during his campaign trips in 2019. The 47-page report, which presents DOI's investigative findings and makes recommendations to the NYPD, the Office of the Mayor, the Conflicts of Interest Board ("COIB"), and the City Department of Records and Information Services ("DORIS"), is attached to this release and posted at the following link: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doi/newsroom/public-reports.page>

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, "This investigation is a testament to DOI's commitment and perseverance to get at the facts no matter the obstacles, as well as the problems that arise when there are no structured, written policies for functions as important as the operations of the Mayor's security detail. Protecting the Mayor and his family is a serious and significant job that should be guided by best practices, formalized procedures, and an understanding that security details are not personal assistants in a dignitary's daily life but provide essential protection. Moreover, this investigation substantiated that New York City expended more than \$300,000 on travel costs alone for the Mayor's security detail during his presidential run. Under existing COIB guidance, these expenses must be repaid by the Mayor, either personally or through his campaign."

The investigation focused on four specific allegations and made related findings:

1. DOI's investigation probed whether the Mayor ordered members of his security detail to move his daughter, Chiara de Blasio, from her Brooklyn apartment to Gracie Mansion in the summer of 2018.

DOI found in some instances the Mayor's security detail was properly used during Chiara de Blasio's move to Gracie Mansion, such as transporting the First Lady to assist in the move and transporting Chiara and her belongings to Gracie Mansion. However, other NYPD resources were inappropriately used, including an NYPD sprinter van that transported some of Chiara's belongings from her apartment to Gracie Mansion, and at least one member of the security detail participating in moving Chiara's belongings, specifically a futon, into and out of the sprinter van.

2. DOI investigated whether the Mayor ordered his security detail to drive his son, Dante de Blasio, to Yale University and to various destinations throughout New York City.

DOI identified multiple instances when detectives from the Mayor's security detail drove Dante de Blasio to or from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, without the Mayor or First Lady present in the vehicle. DOI also found that it was common practice for the security detail to drive Dante de Blasio to locations around New York City without the Mayor or First Lady present, typically at the direction of the security detail's superior officers. Both a sergeant in the detail and a former mayoral staffer recalled several instances when Mayor de Blasio

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directly requested that Dante de Blasio be driven to locations throughout New York City, such as train or bus stations, without the Mayor or First Lady present in the vehicle.

3. DOI investigated whether the Mayor ordered his security detail to transport mayoral staff members, or members of his presidential campaign staff, without him in the vehicle.

DOI's investigation found numerous instances when the Mayor's security detail transported mayoral staffers to various locations, including to their homes, and transported them when running errands for the Mayor. Additionally, DOI identified several instances when the security detail was asked to transport guests of the Mayor, at his direction, without him present in the vehicle.

4. DOI reviewed whether the City of New York had borne the ancillary travel costs for the Mayor's security detail during his presidential campaign.

DOI determined that the City of New York expended \$319,794 for the members of the Mayor's security detail to travel on the Mayor's presidential campaign trips. Mayor de Blasio has not reimbursed the City for these expenses, either personally or through his campaign. DOI also found that, during these campaign trips, the security detail occasionally transported Mayor de Blasio's campaign staffers while driving the Mayor. Both reflect a use of NYPD resources for political purposes.

Other findings from the investigation include:

- DOI learned that for approximately one year the security detail has been conducting frequent security checks at houses owned by the Mayor in Brooklyn, where neither he nor his family members currently reside.
- The NYPD Inspector in charge of the Mayor's security detail actively obstructed and sought to thwart this investigation, frustrating DOI's efforts to learn the full facts regarding these allegations.
- There are no written policies or procedures at the NYPD for the operation of the mayoral security detail. There are no procedures for formally initiating or ending security detail protection, or briefing new protectees on the operation of and proper use of the detail.
- At the root of nearly all of these issues is the complete lack of any written policies or procedures at the NYPD for the operation of the mayoral security detail. Because it does not exist, neither the NYPD nor, as far as DOI is aware, any other City entity provided the Mayor, his family, or his representatives with any guidance – written or otherwise – concerning the appropriate or inappropriate uses of the security detail. Furthermore, the NYPD does not appear to conduct formal or written security analyses or threat assessments for potential protectees, formally initiate or terminate security detail protection, or even properly train detail members to ensure against corruption vulnerabilities.

As part of the investigation, DOI interviewed the Mayor, the First Lady, members and supervisors of the Mayor's security detail, and requested an array of records from NYPD and City Hall, including communications between the Mayor's security detail and City Hall officials and staffers.

The Report provides context on best practices for the provision of executive protection by outlining federal security detail practices at agencies such as the United States Secret Service, the United States Department of State, and the United States Marshals Service. DOI interviewed members of these federal agencies with significant experience in executive protection, including in supervision and training, to identify effective policies and best practices for operating security details and preventing abuse. These interviews provided information about formal processes, including assessing whether an individual is entitled to security detail protection, the level of protection provided, the process of declining protection, and rotation of security detail members to maintain appropriate boundaries between protectee and the detail.

DOI made 13 recommendations, three to the NYPD, seven to the Office of the Mayor, and one each to the COIB and DORIS, including:

- To the NYPD:
  - The NYPD must collect and maintain the records regarding the travel expenses incurred by Mayor de Blasio's security detail during his Campaign, so as to facilitate reimbursement of those expenses.
  - The NYPD should consult with experts on official protection outside of the NYPD to develop and adopt improved practices for standing or long-term security details.
  - The NYPD should create a policy concerning out-of-state travel records at the NYPD. Travel records should specify the purpose of the travel, especially for trips that require any reimbursements to the City.
- To the Office of the Mayor:
  - Electronic devices, including cell phones; and City Hall email addresses, should not be assigned by City Hall to members of the Mayor's security detail.
  - Trainings on document retention obligations should be delivered to all individuals who regularly use electronic devices and emails issued by the Mayor's Office, whether or not they are formally employed by the Mayor's Office.
  - The Office of the Mayor should develop and provide trainings regarding use and retention of text messages to any City employee to whom it issues City Hall cell phones.
- To the COIB:
  - The Conflicts of Interest Board should publicly release as guidance any advice issued to elected officials regarding the use of City resources in connection with political activities.
  - If the Board's advice or guidance provides for the reimbursement of expenses to the City, it should specify, at a minimum, a timeline for such reimbursements to the City and the parties responsible for reimbursement.
- To DORIS:
  - DORIS should issue an updated retention schedule to include rules governing text messages, messaging applications, and any communications not conducted via official government accounts nor retained on government servers.

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett thanked the team of investigators at DOI who conducted this investigation, specifically Senior Investigative Attorney Carolyn Tomsu, former Special Investigator Evelyn McCorkle, Deputy Inspector General Juve Hippolyte, and Senior Inspector General Eleonora Rivkin, with invaluable assistance from Assistant Inspector General Matin Modarressi and Digital Forensics Investigator Matthew Oelsner, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella, Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs and General Counsel Leslie Dubeck, and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel Cort.

*DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.*

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