



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ISSUES CALENDAR YEAR-END STATISTICS

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), released the agency's year-end statistics for Calendar Year ("CY") 2022, January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. In CY 2022, DOI:

- Received approximately 12,580 complaints, an increase of about 3.5% from CY 2021.
- Opened 940 investigations, about 46 more than in CY 2021.
- Maintained an active investigative docket of 1,526 investigations, consistent with CY2021 figures.
- Closed 837 investigations, consistent with CY 2021 figures.
- Collected nearly \$2 million for the City as a result of DOI investigations, \$1.35 million more than in CY 2021.
- Reached 46,869 City employees through our corruption-prevention module, webinars and in-person lectures, 18,680 more employees than in CY 2021.
- Referred 384 investigations for criminal prosecution, a 13% decrease from CY 2021, when DOI referred 443 investigations.
- Arrested 233 individuals, about 55 fewer than in CY 2021.
- Issued 105 policy and procedure recommendations, approximately 96 fewer than in CY 2021.
- Further decreased the backlog of background investigations by closing 928 investigations and reducing the backlog to approximately 910, down from the 2019 high of 6,500.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "These statistics reflect the realities of a post-pandemic New York City and an evolving criminal justice landscape. DOI has met those challenges by reprioritizing the agency's docket to focus resources on investigations that will have the greatest impact. In 2023, as DOI marks its 150th year serving the people of New York City, we will continue to advance our mission through significant investigations that target corruption, fraud and financial abuse in municipal government – a mission that is critical to the City's ability to use its resources efficiently."

Below are some of DOI's investigative highlights from CY 2022, which include matters that we worked with our law enforcement partners. Please click on the headlines to access the individual releases:

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Criminal Charges Against City Department of Correction (DOC) Officers for an Array of Misconduct

DOI's investigations of wrongdoing by DOC staff resulted in: the guilty pleas of two correction officers who accepted bribes in exchange for smuggling contraband, including cell phones and narcotics, onto Rikers Island for gang members; charges against a DOC Captain and three correction officers for reckless endangerment in connection with an inmate's 2019 suicide attempt; the arrest of a DOC Captain who allegedly stole \$40,000 as part of an investment ruse; and fraud charges against three correction officers for falsely claiming illness to DOC to take over a year of sick leave amid the DOC staffing crisis.

Exposing Construction Fraud and Investigating Fatalities

DOI responds to all construction-related fatalities to determine if a criminal investigation is warranted and works with partner law enforcement agencies and the relevant prosecuting authorities. In 2022, those efforts resulted in charges against a construction company and its owner for allegedly causing the death of a five-year-old girl struck by falling pillars, in connection with the construction of a wall in violation of numerous provisions of the City Building Code. In another case, a Brooklyn scaffolding company and its foreperson were charged with reckless endangerment and criminal mischief in a scaffolding collapse that left a woman seriously injured. And DOI's investigation into a tenant's death during a fire at an illegally subdivided Brooklyn apartment building led to the Flatbush landlord's conviction and sentence to six months in jail.

Protecting Workers' Wages

DOI investigates allegations of contractors illegally pocketing workers' wages on City construction job sites. DOI's investigations led to the indictment of a Long Island man who allegedly stole thousands of dollars in a kickback scheme victimizing workers on a City School Construction Authority ("SCA") project in Queens and, in a separate matter, the indictment of an electrical company for allegedly stealing \$1.7 million in worker wages on SCA and City Housing Authority projects. Another investigation resulted in the return of \$900,000 to 200 City Housing Authority construction workers who had been denied the prevailing wage rate on projects by an electrical contractor.

Theft, Fraud and Other Misconduct

DOI's Inspectors General manage a vast array of fraud-related investigations that in 2022 included:

- Theft from the City's pension fund that resulted in two separate arrests, one involving the theft of more than \$50,000 from a deceased pensioner; and one that resulted in charges against an individual who allegedly impersonated a cousin to claim death benefits, stealing over \$135,000 from the City's retirement system.
- A City Job Opportunity Specialist with the Human Resources Administration ("HRA") charged with using her position to access City agency electronic files and allegedly steal the identities of more than 20 children for use as dependents in her family's fake tax return scheme.
- Two men charged in a \$5.4 million scheme to defraud a City program for homeless veterans in which they allegedly submitted more than 340 fraudulent applications seeking cash assistance pursuant to an HRA program.
- One current and one former City employee charged with defrauding the state Medicaid program.
- Eight defendants, including a Brooklyn medical doctor and three pharmacists, charged with illegally distributing more than 1.2 million oxycodone pills.
- The arrest of a former employee of a City contractor on charges of allegedly defrauding two HRA clients who were seeking assistance from HRA's Home Energy Assistance Program.

Corruption-Related Misconduct

- A former CEO of a City-funded nonprofit was sentenced to a prison term of 27 months for conspiring to enrich himself through bribes and kickbacks provided to him by contractors of his nonprofit.
- A former disaster relief consultant and retired NYPD inspector pled guilty to conspiring to commit federal program fraud in connection with the City's Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts.
- Four defendants pled guilty in a fraud involving the COVID-19 hotel room isolation program, which provided free hotel rooms for convalescing patients and healthcare workers.
- A New Jersey man convicted in a scheme to defraud New York City during the pandemic, in connection with a potential sale of PPE, was sentenced to five years' probation, 600 hours of community service and an \$8,000 fine.
- A defendant who oversaw contracts for a company that sells warranties to New York City homeowners covering repairs to sewer and water pipes pled guilty to accepting more than \$500,000 in bribes in connection with a multi-million-dollar City public works contract.

- A longtime contractor with the City Department of Parks and Recreation pled guilty to a \$1 million insurance fraud and was required to pay \$1.2 million in restitution and was barred from City Department of Design and Construction and Business Integrity Commission contracts for 3 years.
- The owner of a Brooklyn construction firm pled guilty to submitting fake receipts, including invoices for a fictitious company, to the City Administration for Children's Services.

[DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD \(OIG-NYPD\) Reports](#)

DOI's OIG-NYPD issued its report assessing the Department's response to the Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology Act of 2020 as well as its annual report updating the status of the numerous recommendations it has made since 2015.

Complaints and Intakes

In CY 2022, the Complaint Intake Unit received communications from the public through various mechanisms, including: 375 complaints processed through the 311 system; 2,122 complaints rerouted from other City agencies; 383 complaints received via mail; 2,020 complaints received via DOI's online complaint system; and 3,727 calls to the Complaint Intake Unit.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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.

**DOI's press releases can also be found at twitter.com/NYC_DOI
Know something rotten in City government? Help DOI Get the Worms Out of the Big Apple.
Call: 212-3-NYC-DOI or email: Corruption@DOI.nyc.gov**