

DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATION

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner



WHAT WE DO

The Department of Investigation (DOI) is a law enforcement agency that promotes and maintains integrity and efficiency in City government by investigating potential corruption, gross mismanagement, waste, and abuse by City agencies, entities, employees and contractors. DOI has oversight of more than 45 mayoral agencies with over 300,000 employees, as well as dozens of City boards and commissions. DOI attacks corruption comprehensively through investigations that lead to arrests, public reports, and recommendations for policy and procedural reforms intended to strengthen agencies' internal controls and improve their operations. DOI's mission is to identify and seek to prevent criminal misconduct, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, and to ensure wrongdoers—whether public officials, City employees, contractors, or other third parties—are held accountable, and thereby improve the way City government functions. DOI serves New Yorkers by acting as an independent and nonpartisan watchdog for City government.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

DOI's commitment to equity focuses on improving the integrity and effectiveness of City government, thus improving public confidence in government operations. DOI focuses on rooting out corruption, mismanagement and fraud, which threaten New Yorkers' equal access to services. DOI works to hold individuals engaged in misconduct accountable and to return stolen funds to the City, to workers, and to other victims of theft and fraud. DOI makes policy and procedure recommendations (PPRs) to remedy vulnerabilities that DOI investigations identify, to improve how City agencies operate, and to prevent future misconduct so that City government can serve all New Yorkers more efficiently and with integrity.

During Fiscal 2024, DOI issued seven public reports addressing systemic issues with widespread public impact. These issues include Department of Buildings (DOB) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) oversight of private inspectors tasked with ensuring that asbestos is identified and safely removed from City construction sites, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)'s handling of potential contamination of the water supplied to NYCHA residents, the City's administration of a promotional civil service exam in the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the NYPD's use of surveillance technologies, and the City's handling of violations of parking laws by City employees who are issued parking placards. These public reports expose misconduct as well as flawed agency practices and policies, and make recommendations for policy and procedural change intended to improve City practices and remedy corruption vulnerabilities.

DOI investigations have resulted in multiple arrests and convictions for criminal activities that divert valuable public resources from their intended beneficiaries, often vulnerable New Yorkers, pose risks to public safety and undermine integrity in City government. One investigation by DOI and its federal partners resulted in the arrests of 70 current and former NYCHA employees on federal bribery and extortion charges in February 2024, the largest single-day bribery takedown in the history of the U.S. Department of Justice. DOI made 14 recommendations to improve procurement-related processes at NYCHA intended to reduce the risk of bribery and extortion, addressing flawed procedures and practices and simultaneously holding wrongdoers accountable.

DOI investigations resulted in arrests and convictions of individuals involved in an array of theft and fraud against the City, from nonprofit fraud to the theft of affordable housing subsidies; held City employees accountable for a range of wrongdoing such as contraband smuggling and theft of public funds; and identified and thwarted construction fraud and the safety problems that are associated with this illegal conduct, among other investigations.

DOI follows the facts and the law, regardless of politics, influence, or position. Through investigations, DOI ensures that wrongdoers who misappropriate public dollars, circumvent City rules to evade safety regulations, or undermine City operations for personal profit, are held accountable.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Protect public resources from corruption, fraud, waste, and abuse and ensure that City employees and vendors act with integrity.

- Goal 1a Investigate potential corruption, fraud, waste, abuse, and unethical conduct to improve the integrity of City operations.
- Goal 1b Improve the impact and effectiveness of investigations.

SERVICE 2 Conduct background and fingerprint checks for certain City employees, contractors and child care workers.

- Goal 2a Ensure that all background investigations and fingerprint checks are conducted in a timely manner.

HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2024

SERVICE 1 Protect public resources from corruption, fraud, waste, and abuse and ensure that City employees and vendors act with integrity.

Goal 1a Investigate potential corruption, fraud, waste, abuse, and unethical conduct to improve the integrity of City operations.

During Fiscal 2024, DOI investigations revealed systemic weaknesses in government policy and operations that could allow for fraud through several large-scale investigations. DOI issued PPRs to address these issues. These recommendations contributed to a 72 percent increase in the number of PPRs issued during Fiscal 2024, totaling 212 PPRs in Fiscal 2024 compared to 123 in Fiscal 2023. Once PPRs are issued, the relevant agencies can then choose whether to accept or reject the PPRs. Among all historically issued PPRs, PPRs pending an outcome from City agencies increased slightly from five percent in Fiscal 2023 to seven percent in Fiscal 2024, and PPRs rejected by City agencies increased from five percent to six percent. DOI is currently reviewing the status of all pending PPRs with agencies and seeking implementation of all relevant PPRs, which may impact the acceptance, pending, and rejection rates.

The vendor integrity program allows companies with historical integrity issues that may otherwise preclude those entities from doing business with the City to be awarded City contracts, where the vendor provides a critical service that a City agency cannot easily obtain elsewhere. Pursuant to this program, the vendor hires and funds an integrity monitor selected and overseen by DOI. The number of monitorships each year fluctuates based on the needs of the City. At the end of Fiscal 2023, DOI was engaged in 12 monitorships. However, at the end of Fiscal 2024, the number of monitorships had decreased to nine as several monitorships were concluded.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY25	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Complaints	12,017	11,543	12,317	13,566	14,610	*	*	Up	*
★ Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued to City agencies	193	313	276	123	212	*	*	Down	*
Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that have been accepted by City agencies (%)	91%	90%	87%	87%	87%	75%	75%	Neutral	Up
— Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that have been implemented of those accepted by City agencies (%)	87%	86%	86%	87%	88%	*	*	Neutral	Up
Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that are still pending an outcome from City agencies (%)	3%	5%	8%	5%	7%	*	*	Up	*
Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that have been rejected by City agencies (%)	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	*	*	Up	*
★ Corruption prevention and whistleblower lectures conducted	318	67	72	240	236	100	100	Neutral	Up
Corruption prevention lecture e-learning attendees	26,298	25,028	23,395	29,245	27,351	*	*	Up	*
Integrity monitoring agreements	12	10	12	12	9	*	*	Down	*
Vendor name checks completed within 30 days (%)	80%	92%	93%	97%	97%	85%	85%	Up	Up
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None									

Goal 1b Improve the impact and effectiveness of investigations.

DOI investigations during Fiscal 2024 resulted in an increase in arrests by 10 percent and an increase in referrals for criminal prosecution by five percent. There was a 14 percent decrease in referrals for civil and administrative action.

During the course of its investigations, when DOI identifies fiscal losses for the City or individuals affected by the investigation, DOI strives to recover and return the funds. The amount ordered and collected in a given fiscal year is outside DOI’s control as these financial recoveries are often the result of court orders. Additionally, financial recoveries collected in a given period are not necessarily equivalent to recoveries ordered and agreed to during the same period due to court-ordered payment schedules. In Fiscal 2024, financial recoveries to the City ordered or agreed to decreased by 53 percent after a large spike in recoveries in Fiscal 2023. Financial recoveries to individuals and non-City entities ordered or agreed to decreased by 82 percent, down to approximately \$375,000 from \$2,063,000 in Fiscal 2023.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY25	5-Year	Desired Direction
Average time to complete an investigation (days)	215	218	213	201	214	180	180	Neutral	Down
Active Investigations	1,784	1,632	1,549	1,618	1,616	*	*	Neutral	*
Closed investigations	1,035	930	803	878	895	*	*	Down	Up
Referrals for civil and administrative action	1,003	936	984	918	793	*	*	Down	*
Referrals for criminal prosecution	778	523	415	425	446	*	*	Down	*
★ Arrests resulting from DOI investigations	545	288	288	313	344	*	*	Down	*
Financial recoveries to the City ordered/agreed (\$000)	\$2,556	\$2,715	\$1,863	\$10,121	\$4,805	*	*	Up	*
Financial recoveries to the City collected (\$000)	\$2,044	\$2,580	\$7,017	\$2,118	\$2,192	*	*	Neutral	*
Financial recoveries to individuals and non-City entities ordered/agreed (\$000)	\$2,639	\$3,419	\$3,810	\$2,063	\$375	*	*	Down	*
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator “NA” Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None									

SERVICE 2 Conduct background and fingerprint checks for certain City employees, contractors and child care workers.

Goal 2a Ensure that all background investigations and fingerprint checks are conducted in a timely manner.

Due in part to a reduction in headcount on the team working on backlogged background investigations, and the complexity of the pending investigations, DOI closed 33 percent fewer backlogged background investigations, meaning those background investigations requested prior to July 2019, in Fiscal 2024 than in Fiscal 2023. However, the number of open backlogged investigations was approximately halved in Fiscal 2024, from 729 of these pre-2019 investigations remaining open at the conclusion of Fiscal 2023 to 360 remaining open at the conclusion of Fiscal 2024.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY25	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Average time to complete a background investigation (from date of receipt) (days)	88	107	71	119	115	180	180	Up	Down
Closed background investigations (of those opened on or after July 1, 2019)	1,354	1,180	1,386	1,712	1,714	*	*	Up	*
Background investigations received and closed within 6 months (%)	97%	91%	99%	99%	99%	80%	80%	Neutral	Up
Backlogged background investigations closed during the reporting period	1,880	1,879	1,443	547	369	*	*	Down	*
Backlogged background investigations remaining open	4,599	2,720	1,276	729	360	*	*	Down	*
Time to notify the Department of Mental Health and Hygiene of arrest notifications for current child care workers after receipt from the State Division of Criminal Justice Services (days)	2	4	1	1	1	*	*	Down	Down
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator “NA” Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None									

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
Customer Experience	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY25	5-Year	Desired Direction
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Neutral	Up
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	3	3	3	3	3	*	*	Neutral	Down
CORE facility rating	100	NA	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	Up
Completed requests for interpretation	5	NA	9	20	87	*	*	NA	*
★ Critical Indicator ✱ Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None									

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual ¹					Plan ²		
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY25	5yr Trend
Expenditures (\$000,000) ³	\$53.2	\$51.4	\$49.9	\$47.7	\$59.1	\$53.4	\$53.8	Neutral
Revenues (\$000,000)	\$2.6	\$1.7	\$2.6	\$2.8	\$3.6	\$4.2	\$4.2	Up
Personnel	362	332	287	272	273	317	285	Down
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$696	\$146	\$377	\$372	\$107	\$107	\$107	Down
¹ Actual financial amounts for the current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at nyc.gov/mmr for details. ² Authorized Budget Level ³ Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available *None								

SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Where possible, the relationship between an agency's goals and its expenditures and planned resources, by budgetary unit of appropriation (UA), is shown in the 'Applicable MMR Goals' column. Each relationship is not necessarily exhaustive or exclusive. Any one goal may be connected to multiple UAs, and any UA may be connected to multiple goals.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY23 ¹ (\$000,000)	Modified Budget FY24 ² (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals ³
Personal Services - Total	\$24.6	\$28.4	
001 - Personal Services	\$20.3	\$21.7	All
003 - Inspector General	\$4.3	\$6.7	All
Other Than Personal Services - Total	\$23.1	\$30.8	
002 - Other Than Personal Services	\$22.7	\$29.7	All
004 - Inspector General	\$0.4	\$1.0	All
Agency Total	\$47.7	\$59.1	
¹ Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023. Includes all funds. ² City of New York Adopted Budget for Fiscal 2024, as of June 2024. Includes all funds. ³ Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. "NA" Not Available * None			

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- The Department updated Fiscal 2023 values for several indicators to reflect finalized data. These include 'Complaints' (updated from 13,562 to 13,566), 'Written policy and procedure recommendations (PPRs) issued to City agencies' (updated from 120 to 123), 'Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that have been accepted by City agencies' (updated from 86 percent to 87 percent), 'Written PPRs issued during previous fiscal years that have been implemented of those accepted by City agencies' (updated from 86 percent to 87 percent), 'Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that are still pending an outcome from City agencies' (updated from 9 percent to 5 percent), 'Written Policy and Procedure Recommendations issued during previous fiscal years that have been rejected by City agencies' (updated from 4 percent to 5 percent), 'Corruption prevention and whistleblower lectures conducted' (updated from 234 to 240), 'Corruption prevention lecture e-learning attendees' (updated from 29,031 to 29,245), 'Financial recoveries to the City ordered/agreed (\$000)' (updated from 10,110 to 10,121), 'Financial recoveries to the City collected (\$000)' (updated from 7,017 to 2,118), 'Active Investigations' (updated from 1,615 to 1,618), 'Closed investigations' (updated from 877 to 878), 'Referrals for civil and administrative action' (updated from 900 to 918), 'Referrals for criminal prosecution' (updated from 402 to 425) and 'Arrests resulting from DOI investigations' (updated from 291 to 313).
- Performance data is unavailable for 'CORE facility rating' as no DOI service centers were visited in Fiscal 2024.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the agency, please visit: www.nyc.gov/doi.