

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
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TRAFFIC COURT CARS BREAK TRAFFIC LAWS

The City of New Orleans Inspector General today released a report on an administrative investigation of the use of take home cars at the New Orleans Traffic Court.

The investigation disclosed that 4 of 5 of the take-home cars assigned to Traffic Court contained blue emergency lights, an apparent violation of state and local laws. It also revealed that Administrative Judge Robert Jones' take-home car had a license plate cover that partially obscured the license plate, an apparent violation of state and local law. Judge Jones and Judge Sholes failed to report accidents and/or damages to the City Attorney as required. Judges Cade, Jones, Shea, and Sholes, and Clerk of Court Cassanova used their City take-home vehicles for substantial personal use. Judge Sholes declined to be interviewed and expressed the view that the cars belong to the court because they were purchased from the Judicial Expense Fund.

Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux said, "The judges said that they did not respond to emergencies and regarded the cars as an historical benefit. The City paid \$152,000 to buy them and thousands more to repair collision damages. These perks are unnecessary and unaffordable."

The report is attached to this press release. Other reports issued by the Office of Inspector General can be viewed and downloaded from the website at <http://www.nolaig.org>.

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