

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS



ED QUATREVAUX
INSPECTOR GENERAL

May 3, 2012

Andy Kopplin, First Deputy Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer
New Orleans City Hall
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112

Dear Mr. Kopplin:

On January 18, 2011, the Office of Inspector General issued a letter titled, *Municipal Court "Take Home" Vehicles*. The letter noted that the City's assignment of take-home vehicles to the Municipal Court did not meet the City's criteria for take-home vehicles. A recommendation was made that the City review the assignment of take-home vehicles to the Municipal Court and take appropriate action under Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Policy Memorandum 5(R).

The current CAO Policy Memorandum 5(R) states, "Take-home vehicles will only be assigned to full-time City employees who need to respond to on-site, City business related incidences on a 24-hour basis. This criterion will not be considered to be attained by employees simply being available on a 24-hour basis. This provision will be considered to be attained when an employee is regularly and recurrently called out during an employee's non-traditional working hours to perform duties associated with that employee's duties and responsibilities."

Your email dated April 23, 2012 stated, "When Mayor Landrieu ordered a reduction in take home cars back in 2010 and we took back 464 of them from agencies under the Mayor's direct control, we sent our new policy memorandum to other elected officials and commended it to them. We have asked the Sheriff, Coroner, and District Attorney as well as the Judges in Criminal, Municipal, and Traffic courts, all of whom are independently elected officials, to take responsibility for applying this policy to themselves and their employees as they are best positioned to analyze the job requirements of their personnel and the need for take home cars for their employees consistent with this policy. If the Office of Inspector General has additional information about how each of these agencies is implementing our policy, we would be interested in receiving it so we can review your comprehensive analysis to determine whether a different approach is warranted with regard to how the City oversees the implementation of this policy by other independently elected officials."

This statement differs from CAO Policy Memorandum 5(R), which states, "This entire policy applies to all licensed vehicles and other mobile equipment considered property of the City of New Orleans. This policy supports reduced costs, better management of City resources, reduced claims and liabilities and designation of areas of responsibility and accountability."

The cars assigned to the Municipal and Traffic Courts are the property of the City of New Orleans. As of the date of this letter, the City has continued to provide the Municipal Court judges with City-owned take-home vehicles, despite the fact that the judges are not required to respond on-site to critical needs on a 24-hour basis as outlined in Policy Memorandum 5(R).¹ There is no legal requirement that the City continue to provide this benefit which does not conform to its policy.²

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Eileen Shanklin-Andrus, First Assistant Inspector General of Audit and Review at (504) 681-3200.

Sincerely,



E.R. Quatrevaux
Inspector General

cc: Judge Paul Sens, Municipal Court Administrative Judge

¹ We note that district court judges in Louisiana are prohibited from this benefit, with the exception of those in multi-parish jurisdictions.

² We note that the municipal court judges are prohibited by state law from having total compensation greater than that for district court judges in Orleans Parish. Accordingly, any benefit, such as a take-home vehicle, which increased the judges' total compensation above the amount for district court judges, is a potential violation of state law.