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Report questions free tickets for city officials

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NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The New Orleans Inspector General says hundreds of free tickets to the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival were given to officials in city departments last year in a possible violation of state ethics law.

One official interviewed by investigators says departments have received free tickets to the festival since she started in city government in 1988.

The possible value of tickets given away last year topped \$33,000.

Some officials said they knew the give-away violated ethics law. At least one said he threw the tickets away. Some said they gave them to workers with duties at the festival. Some went to employees for their personal use.

The report recommended that the city end the free ticket practice, and develop credentials for workers with official city business and the festival.

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