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CITY OVERPAYS FOR ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM

The New Orleans Office of Inspector General today released the first of two reports on the administration and oversight of the City’s Electronic Monitoring Program operated by the Orleans Parish Sheriff’s Office. The program was established as an alternative to incarceration for pretrial defendants. Part one of the report, “Budget and Billing,” evaluated the financial administration of the program and the City’s oversight of billing practices.

Evaluators found that OPSO was awarded the Electronic Monitoring Program contract in a non-competitive procurement at a higher daily rate per participant than OPSO had previously proposed. This rate was also higher than OPSO’s daily rate for program participants paid for by a grant.

In 2011 and 2012 OPSO’s budgeted program expenditures exceeded revenues by more than \$100,000, and OPSO billed the City approximately \$23,000 due to billing errors, which the City did not identify. Finally, OPSO billed—and the City paid for—ineligible post-sentencing defendants to participate in the program.

“Cities across the country establish electronic monitoring programs to reduce the social and financial costs of custodial incarceration. The City should ensure that it pays a competitive price for its program and only pays for the pretrial defendant population the program is intended to serve,” stated Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux. “The Sheriff’s Office must also do a better job of managing the public monies that pay for the program.”

Part two of the report will examine the Electronic Monitoring Program’s operations.

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.nolaoig.org>.

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