

MONTHLY REPORT

AUGUST 2025



OIG

**NEW ORLEANS
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**EDWARD MICHEL, CIG
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION



2,085

Number of registered X followers

ADMINISTRATION

The Office Manager is responsible for the following:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Procurement Process
- Operations

INFORMATION SECURITY

The OIG Information Security Specialist is responsible for maintaining the OIG's information technology (IT) integrity through:

- Technical Support
- Hardware and Software Updates
- Communication and Coordination
- Consultation for IT Purchases

COMMUNICATIONS

The Public Information Officer is responsible for the following:

- Public and Media Relations
- Social Media
- Monthly and Annual Reports to the ERB
- Editing | Writing | Reviewing

AUDIT & REVIEW DIVISION

The **Audit and Review Division** conducts financial audits, attestations, compliance, and performance audits of City programs and operations. Auditors test for appropriate internal controls and compliance with laws, regulations, and other requirements.



The Audit and Review Division has the following projects in process:

- NOAB Contract Audit
- EMS Response Time
- New Orleans Recreation Department Maintenance Audit
- Non-profit Property Tax Exemptions

Project Phase Descriptions:

Planning - includes background research, data gathering, initial interviews, and/or internal controls assessment.

Fieldwork - includes data and statistical analyses, interviews, testing of procedures, onsite observations, and/or physical inspections.

Draft Report - includes data and statistical reviews, documenting fieldwork results, initial report writing, revisions, and internal Quality Assurance Review (QAR) prior to supervisory review.

Supervisory Review - includes the review by both Deputy Inspector General and First Assistant Inspector General to ensure sufficiency and appropriateness of evidence, adequate fieldwork procedures, and proper conclusions, content, presentation, and readability.

Legal Review - Report review by in-house General Counsel and/or outside Legal Counsel to ensure appropriate and proper legal citations and/or interpretations.

IG Review - Report review by the Inspector General based on corrections and recommended changes resulting from the Legal Review.

30-Day Comment Period - 30-day deadline for the department to review the draft report and submit management responses for inclusion in the final report.

MEASURING PROGRESS

AUDIT AND REVIEW DIVISION

The following information provides a summary of the Audit Division's project phase and a summary of the audit objectives.

Project Name	Project Phase ¹	Anticipated ² Completion Date
NOAB Contract Audit	Fieldwork	Ongoing
Summary of Objectives: The purpose of the audit is to verify NOAB management compliance with relevant policies and procedures while procuring professional services contracts and assess the effectiveness of NOAB management controls in ensuring vendor compliance with contract terms.		
EMS Response Time	Fieldwork	Ongoing
Summary of Objectives: The purpose of the audit is to determine whether the City is responding to medical emergencies timely and in accordance with their policies and national standards.		
New Orleans Recreation Department Maintenance Audit	Fieldwork	Ongoing
Summary of Objectives: The objective of the audit is to determine whether NORD maintained their facilities in accordance with policy and best practices.		
Non-profit Property Tax Exemptions	Planning	Ongoing
Summary of Objectives: The objective of the audit is to determine if the City is adequately verifying the eligibility of non-profits exempt from paying property taxes, as well as to determine if organizations are improperly included as exempt.		

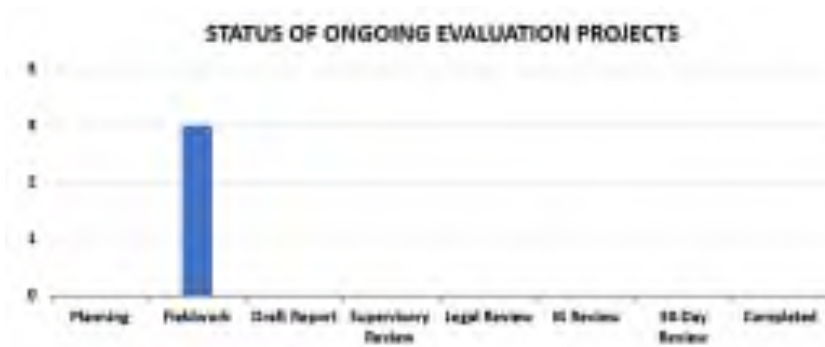
Footnotes:

1 - Project phase determination is based on the objective(s), scope, and methodology for each project. It is not determined by a standard set of hours and/or phase deadline.

2 - The completion date may be re-evaluated if necessary.

INSPECTIONS & EVALUATIONS DIVISION

The **Inspections and Evaluations Division** works to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of City programs, agencies, and operations. Evaluators conduct independent, objective, empirically based and methodically sound inspections, evaluations, and performance reviews.



The Inspections & Evaluations Division has the following projects in process:

- NORD Booster Clubs and Athletic Teams Resources
- Traffic Camera Safety Program Follow-Up
- Equipment Maintenance Division Fleet Management

Project Phase Descriptions:

Planning - includes background research, data gathering, initial interviews, and/or internal controls assessment.

Fieldwork - includes data and statistical analyses, interviews, testing of procedures, onsite observations, and/or physical inspections.

Draft Report - includes data and statistical reviews, documenting fieldwork results, initial report writing, revisions and internal Quality Assurance Review (QAR) prior to supervisory review.

Supervisory Review - includes the review by both Deputy Inspector General and First Assistant Inspector General to ensure sufficiency and appropriateness of evidence, adequate fieldwork procedures, and proper conclusions, content, presentation and readability.

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IG Review - Report review by the Inspector General based on corrections and recommended changes resulting from the Legal Review.

30-Day Comment Period - 30-day deadline for the department to review the draft report and submit management responses for inclusion in the final report.

MEASURING PROGRESS

INSPECTIONS AND EVALUATIONS DIVISION

The following information provides a summary of the Inspections and Evaluations Division's project phase and a summary of each project's objectives.

Project Name	Project Phase ¹	Anticipated ² Completion Date
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NORD Booster Clubs and
Athletic Teams Resources

Fieldwork

Ongoing

Summary of Objectives: To determine whether NORD has sufficient controls in place to ensure that teams comply with NORD policies and with the law as well as to assess whether NORD's youth athletics registration fee policies and procedures result in equitable and consistent opportunities for the City's youth.

Traffic Camera Safety Program
Follow-Up

Fieldwork

Ongoing

Summary of Objectives: To determine whether the City adopted the changes recommended in the OIG's 2020 report Management and Operations of the Traffic Camera Safety Program.

Equipment Maintenance Division
Fleet Management

Fieldwork

Ongoing

Summary of Objectives: To determine if the EMD has policies and procedures to adequately maintain, inventory, and surplus City equipment in an efficient and effective manner.

Footnotes:

1 - Project phase determination is based on the objective(s), scope, and methodology for each project. It is not determined by a standard set of hours and/or phase deadline.

2 - The completion date may be re-evaluated if necessary.

INVESTIGATION DIVISION

Mayor Cantrell, former NOPD officer Vappie charged in superseding indictment

On Aug. 15, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana, announced an 18-count superseding indictment for conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to obstruct justice, obstruction of justice, and making false declarations before a grand jury against **New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell** and her former bodyguard, **Jeffrey Vappie**.

Cantrell and Vappie are scheduled for a Sept. 10 arraignment in federal court.

Cantrell faces nearly a dozen felony counts in the indictment, which alleges she and Vappie perpetrated a yearslong scheme to defraud the City of New Orleans and New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) by exploiting their positions with the City for personal gain. The indictment accuses Cantrell and Vappie of employing various tactics, including deleting evidence and making false statements to federal agents and/or a grand jury, to continue and conceal their scheme.

Vappie, a former NOPD officer, was initially indicted in July 2024 on federal charges of wire fraud. He now faces additional counts of wire fraud as well as charges of conspiracy. His trial is scheduled for December 2025, but his trial date is subject to change due to the superseding indictment.

The indictment is the result of collaboration among the New Orleans OIG, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana, the FBI New Orleans Field Office, and the Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans. The U.S. Attorney's Office recognized the contributions of the OIG in a press release and press conference announcing the superseding indictment.

OTHER ONGOING PROSECUTIONS:

The Investigation Division also continues to assist in the criminal prosecutions of Leessa Augustine, Tyrell Morris, Gabriel Thomas, and Michael Willis Jr.

Augustine, a former New Orleans SWBNO Senior Special Agent and reserve NOPD officer, pled guilty June 11 to two counts of wire fraud relating to an emergency benefit, one count of wire fraud affecting a financial institution, and one count of making false statements to investigators. Her sentencing is set for Sept. 16, 2025.

Morris, former Executive Director of the Orleans Parish Communication District (OPCD), was indicted on charges of insurance fraud, malfeasance in office, impersonation of a police officer, and second-degree injuring of public records. Morris' trial date, scheduled for August, was moved to Sept. 22, 2025.

INVESTIGATION DIVISION

(ONGOING PROSECUTIONS CONTINUED)

Thomas, a former SWBNO employee, was arrested by Louisiana State Police's Troop NOLA last December as part of a joint investigation into brass and copper thefts from SWBNO. Thomas' motions hearings were concluded in August pending his trial date.

Willis, a former City of New Orleans tow truck driver, was arrested by Louisiana State Police in late July as part of a joint investigation by the OIG and Louisiana State Police Troop NOLA. The investigation revealed Willis was bypassing the official tow process by accepting cash payments in exchange for not towing vehicles. He was arrested by State Police on charges of malfeasance in office, obstruction of justice, and injuring public records.

An indictment is merely a charge and the guilt of the defendant must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

Report on Department of Safety & Permits to be released

The OIG's Department of Safety & Permits (S&P) Review is set for release in September. The report contains findings and recommendations resulting from an extensive review of the agency's policies, procedures, and internal controls. The OIG conducted the review, which involved embedding OIG staff at S&P, with a focus on identifying and mitigating inefficiencies at this critical agency.

The OIG initiated the review of S&P following multiple instances of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement within S&P. Investigations into these instances by the OIG and partnering agencies led to the arrest, indictment, termination, and/or resignation under investigation of multiple S&P employees. These repeated instances point to ineffective operations at a systemic level, which created opportunities for corruption. The report includes recommendations for reforming S&P to ensure efficient and effective services for the citizens of New Orleans.

BY THE NUMBERS

During **August**, the Investigation Division received 14 complaints, opened two investigations, and served four requests for documentation.

***Investigation Division numbers are the latest available as of report date.**

2025 BUDGET

Total 2025 Appropriation \$ 4,488,636

Expenditures	Spent YTD
Personnel	\$ 1,890,141
Operating	\$ 190,921
Total	\$ 2,081,063
Remaining Balance	\$ 2,407,573

*Budget table is as of July 31, 2025, the latest monthly budget information available as of report date.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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New Orleans Office of Inspector General

Published by Edward Michel · August 15 at 5:13 PM · 5

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Today, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana, announced a superseding indictment for conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to obstruct justice, obstruction of justice, and making false declarations before a grand jury against New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell.

The indictment also includes additional charges against Cantrell's former bodyguard and NOPD officer Jeffrey Vappie, originally indicted in July 2024.

Today's indictment is the result of collaboration among the New Orleans OIG, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana, [FBI - New Orleans](#), and the [Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans](#).

Inspector General Ed Michel stated: "The Office of Inspector General will continue to combine our resources with those of our federal and local partners to ensure integrity in City government."

<https://www.justice.gov/-/new-orleans-mayor-la-toya>

		FILED U.S. DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF LA MICHELIS PIRELLA CHIEF CLERK, 15-11111, 15-11111	
		FELONY	
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA			
SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT WIRE FRAUD, WIRE FRAUD, CONSPIRACY TO OBSTRUCT JUSTICE, OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE, FALSE STATEMENTS, AND FALSE DECLARATIONS BEFORE GRAND JURY			
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	*	CRIMINAL NO. 24-145	
v.	*	SECTION "B"	
JEFFREY PAUL VAPPIE, D	*	VIOLATIONS: 18 U.S.C. § 371	
LATOYA CANTRELL	*	18 U.S.C. § 1343	
	*	18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(1)	
	*	18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(2)	
	*	18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)	
	*	18 U.S.C. § 1591(a)(2)	
	*	18 U.S.C. § 1623	
* * *			
The Grand Jury charges that:			
COUNT 1			
(18 U.S.C. § 1512 - Conspiracy)			
A. AT ALL TIMES MATERIAL HERETO:			
<u>Overview</u>			
1. The Defendant, LATOYA CANTRELL, (CANTRELL), was the Mayor of the City of New Orleans. She was elected to serve a four-year term in November 2017, and was re-elected in November 2021, to serve a second four-year term.			

SOCIAL MEDIA



Instagram: @NewOrleansOIG



X: @NOLA0IG

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48 minutes ago

NEW ORLEANS OIG

FIGHTING FRAUD

TIP OF THE MONTH

Signs of Collusion in Bidding

- Subcontracts for losing bidders
 - A winning bidder subcontracts work to one or more losing bidders.
- Low bids AND inexplicably high bills
 - The contractors appear to have expressed a bid of the contract by each bidding law on some aspect of the contract and inexplicably high on other parts.
- Meetings among competitors
 - Competitors are seen meeting shortly before or after bids are submitted.



[View insights](#) [Boost post](#)

neworleansoig This month, our Fraud Tip focuses on signs of collusion in bidding. Collusion in bidding occurs when two or more contractors, companies, or vendors conspire to manipulate the bidding process, often to inflate prices or ensure a specific bidder wins. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the items below are signs of potential collusion.

 New Orleans OIG @NOLA0IG · 8h

Ever wonder how the OIG selects projects and focus areas? Each year, we conduct a planning process that identifies goals, priorities, and strategies that align with our mission while effectively using available resources.



 New Orleans OIG @NOLA0IG · 8h

The planning process involves a risk assessment that gauges the potential for fraud and/or corruption at City boards, departments, and commissions. To learn more, see our 2025 Annual Work plan: [https://www.nola.gov/office-of-integrity/annual-work-plan](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Office of Inspector General City of New Orleans

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The OIG is pleased to announce that the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) Peer Review Team has found our office fully compliant with national standards for Offices of Inspectors General.

The New Orleans OIG is subject to peer review every three years by the national AIG. The review assesses compliance of our Audit & Review (AR), Investigation (ID), and Inspection & Evaluation (I&E) Divisions with AIG and U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) standards.

Thank you to the Peer Review Team from [Virginia Office of the State Inspector General](#) for their diligent work!

[#transparency](#) [#NOLAIG](#) [#peerreview](#)

<https://lnkd.in/gPDDaNy2>



Press Release: Peer Review finds New Orleans OIG fully compliant with national standards

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