

# **MONTHLY REPORT**

**DECEMBER 2025**



# **OIG**

**NEW ORLEANS  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**EDWARD MICHEL, CIG  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

# ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

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# 2,080

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

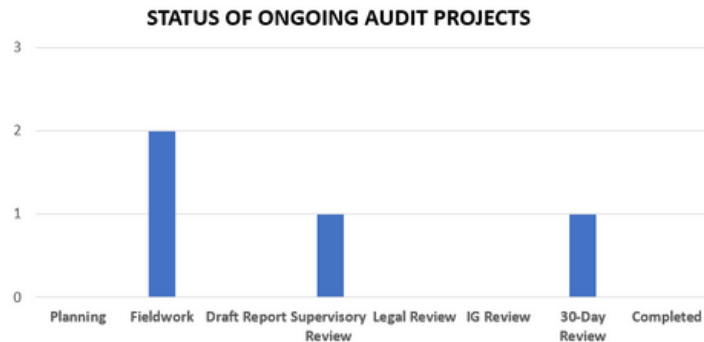
## COMMUNICATIONS

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 <sup>1</sup>	Anticipated <sup>2</sup> Completion Date
NOAB Contract Audit	30-Day Review	Ongoing
<b>Summary of Objectives:</b> 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	Supervisory Review	Ongoing
<b>Summary of Objectives:</b> 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
<b>Summary of Objectives:</b> 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	Fieldwork	Ongoing
<b>Summary of Objectives:</b> 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.

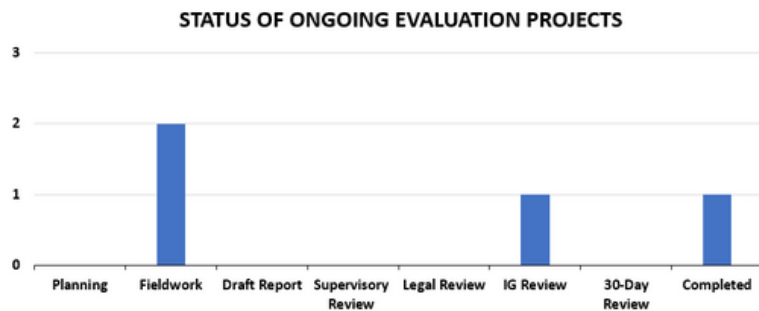


# INSPECTIONS & EVALUATIONS DIVISION

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.

## **NEW HIRE:** Adam Bradley joins OIG

The OIG is excited to welcome **Adam Bradley** to our team. Adam began his role as an OIG Evaluator in November 2025, bringing years of experience in nonprofit administration and public health research and evaluation. He holds a Master of Public Health as well as Bachelor's degrees in Biology and Spanish. He is fluent in Spanish.



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
- NOPD Overtime

## **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.

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# 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 <sup>1</sup>	Anticipated <sup>2</sup> 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

Completed

Jan. 8, 2026

**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.

NOPD Overtime

IG Review

Ongoing

**Summary of Objectives:** To determine whether NOPD policies and procedures for overtime are consistent with best practices and effective in preventing payroll fraud.

### 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

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## ONGOING PROSECUTIONS:

The Investigation Division continues to assist in the criminal prosecutions of Mayor LaToya Cantrell and Jeffrey Vappie, Leessa Augustine, Gabriel Thomas, and Michael Willis Jr.

### Updates include the following:

**Augustine**, a former New Orleans SWBNO Senior Special Agent and reserve NOPD officer, was sentenced Dec. 16, 2025, to six months of home detention to be followed by five years' supervised release and \$94,972 in restitution. Augustine pled guilty in June 2025 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.

**Thomas**, a former SWBNO employee, was appointed a new attorney in late 2025, which pushed back his court proceedings. His pre-trial hearings were moved to Jan. 26, 2026, and his trial date was moved to Feb. 9, 2026. Thomas was arrested by Louisiana State Police Troop NOLA in December 2024 as part of a joint investigation into brass and copper thefts from SWBNO.

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

## BY THE NUMBERS

As of **Dec. 15**, the Investigation Division had received four complaints, opened three investigations, and made three records requests. Five search warrants have been obtained.

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

# 2025 BUDGET

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**Total 2025 Appropriation \$ 4,488,636**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Spent YTD</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>\$ 3,248,388</b>
<b>Operating</b>	<b>\$ 506,954</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,755,342</b>
<b>Remaining Balance</b>	<b>\$ 733,294</b>

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# SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook: @NewOrleansOIG



X: @NOLAOIG



New Orleans Office of Inspector General

December 23, 2025 at 12:47 PM · 🌐

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This week, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana, announced the sentencing of former New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board senior special agent and New Orleans Police Department reserve officer Leessa Augustine in connection with multiple fraud schemes.

We are grateful to the U.S. Attorney's Office for its pursuit of justice in this case.

It is our duty at the Office of Inspector General to ensure that public officials uphold their responsibilities with integrity. The OIG will continue to pursue accountability for those who misuse their public positions for personal gain. The citizens of New Orleans deserve nothing less.



New Orleans OIG @NOLAOIG · Dec 23, 2025



This week, @EDLAnews announced the sentencing of former Sewerage & Water Board special agent and NOPD reserve officer Leessa Augustine in connection with multiple fraud schemes. We are grateful to the U.S. Attorney's Office for its pursuit of justice in this case.

## Former Sewerage & Water Board Special Agent Sentenced for Multiple Fraud Schemes

Monday, December 22, 2025

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### For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana  
[brittany.t.maique@usdoj.gov](mailto:brittany.t.maique@usdoj.gov)

**NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA** – Acting United States Attorney Michael M. Simpson announced that **LEESSA AUGUSTINE** ("AUGUSTINE") age 47, a resident of New Orleans, was sentenced on December 16, 2025, for charges related to her involvement in fraud schemes while employed as a Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans ("S&WB") Senior Special Agent, a position that tasked her with investigating the alleged misconduct of other Sewerage & Water Board employees.

United States District Judge Greg Gerard Guidry sentenced **AUGUSTINE** to 6 months' home detention to be followed by five years' supervised release and \$94,972 in restitution.

**AUGUSTINE** sentence was imposed on her guilty pleas to three counts of Wire Fraud and one count of making False Statements for lying to investigators. In one scheme, **AUGUSTINE**, who was also a New Orleans Police Department reserve officer, billed a police detail

# SOCIAL MEDIA




Instagram: @NewOrleansOIG

## Part 1: Background



Today, the OIG released a

 neworleansoig The New Orleans OIG has released a public letter finding no evidence of cheating or bias in the New Orleans Police Department's (NOPD) 2024 promotional exams for Captain and Major positions.

While overall findings were announced earlier this year, today's letter provides further details on the OIG's investigation as well as guidance for strengthening the NOPD's promotional process.

For details, see the video above!


In addition, a review of metadata associated with this investigation prompted the opening of another investigation involving lack of candor and failure to cooperate in an OIG investigation. Stay tuned for that investigation's findings, to be released in the coming weeks.

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## Part 2: Findings



OIG investigators

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## Part 3: Recommendation



deserve

# SOCIAL MEDIA



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**Office of Inspector General City of New Orleans**

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1mo •

The OIG Fraud Tip of the Month for December focuses on employee payroll fraud. According to the U.S. Department of Justice OIG and ARA Fraud and Forensic Services, indicators of potential payroll fraud include the items listed below.

To report fraud, waste, and abuse by City government or City contractors, contact the New Orleans OIG at 504-681-3247 or <https://lnkd.in/gU2z2vVY>.

[#NolaOIG](#) [#FraudTipOfTheMonth](#)

NEW ORLEANS OIG

## FIGHTING FRAUD TIP OF THE MONTH

### SIGNS OF PAYROLL FRAUD

**These may include:**

- Inaccurate, corrected, or missing time cards.
- Excessive overtime or splitting overtime between pay periods to avoid biweekly pay limit caps.
- Unusual spikes in overtime or bonuses.
- Multiple employees with the same bank account number.
- A terminated employee who is still on the payroll list.
- An employee who is on the payroll but not on the agency's employee list.
- An employee who has been paid for working more than 24 hours in one day.

