

WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

BEFORE THE ETHICS BOARD

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IN RE: ANDRE MASON

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COMPLAINT C-24-08

Respondent

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**DECISION AND ORDER**

This matter, a Complaint filed pursuant to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (“WSSC”) Code of Regulations<sup>1</sup>, was heard over the course of three days, June 16 and 17, and July 9, 2025, before the WSSC Board of Ethics. The Hearing Officer was George E. Pruden II, Board of Ethics Chairman. The other members of the Board of Ethics who heard this matter were Steven Hausman, and Jeffrey Hysen regular members, and alternate member Chandria Slaughter. Associate General Counsel II Nancy C. Lineman, appointed Staff Counsel in this matter pursuant to WSSC Code § 1.70.080(c) presented the case on behalf of WSSC. Respondent Andre Mason was represented at the hearing by Tramaine Riles, Shop Steward with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (“AFSCME”).

The proceedings were conducted pursuant to Board of Ethics Rules of Procedure (Code §§ 1.65.070(d)-(e)), Code of Ethics (Code § 1.70.080(g)), and WSSC’s Procedure for Adjudicatory Hearings (Code Chapter 2.35).

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<sup>1</sup> WSSC’s Code of Regulations shall hereinafter be referred to as the “Code”.

## **SUMMARY**

On October 16, 2024, on its own motion, the Board filed a Complaint alleging that Andre Mason had violated the WSSC Code of Ethics. The Complaint alleged that Mr. Mason violated two sections of the Code of Ethics, Section 1.70.200(a) and (c) (Misuse of prestige of office – Harassment – Improper Influence) and Section 1.70.210 (Disclosure of Confidential Information). Specifically, Mr. Mason is alleged to have provided confidential WSSC customer information to a friend, Nicholas Matthews, and solicited business on behalf of Mr. Matthews' plumbing company, Pipe Pros.

In accordance with Code § 1.70.080(c), the Board referred the Complaint to the General Counsel's Office to assign Staff Counsel to investigate. Nancy C. Lineman, WSSC Associate General Counsel II, was assigned to serve as Staff Counsel. The evidence gathered by Ms. Lineman was presented to the Board at its March 12, 2025 meeting. After considering the evidence, the Board decided to proceed to a hearing on the Complaint.

## **FINDING OF FACTS**

The Board makes the following findings of fact by a preponderance of the evidence:<sup>2</sup>

1. Andre Mason began his employment with WSSC on September 10, 2010. At all times relevant, he has held the position of Utility Technician III in the Utility Services South Division at the Temple Hills Depot. When hired, Mr. Mason signed an "Employee Confidentiality Agreement" acknowledging that during his employment he would become aware of confidential information concerning "WSSC projects, practices, contracts, methodologies, and technologies" and agreeing "to keep all such information strictly confidential in consideration for [his] employment with WSSC." Mr. Mason further agreed that he "shall not at any time or in any manner, either directly or indirectly,

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<sup>2</sup> Code, Board of Ethics Rules of Procedure, Ch. 1.65.070(e)(1).

divulge, disclose, or communicate documents or information that [he] knows or should know is confidential to third parties except in the performance of [his] job duties.”

2. When hired, Mr. Mason signed a “Code of Ethics Acknowledgement” attesting that he had received a copy of and training in WSSC’s Code of Ethics. Mr. Mason’s training in the WSSC Code of Ethics was refreshed on an annual basis with a mandatory ethics training. The Code of Ethics provides that an employee “must not disclose confidential information relating to or maintained by WSSC that is not available to the public.” Code of Ethics § 1.70.210. In addition, it states that “an employee...must not use confidential information for personal gain or the gain of another.” *Id.*

3. Complaints about leaks or broken pipes are called in by customers to WSSC’s Emergency Call Center.<sup>3</sup> The employees who staff the Emergency Call Center take the information from the customer and enter a work order through the Maintenance Management Information System computer system (“MMIS”). They then send out the appropriate technicians or crews to perform the necessary work. In the course of his job as a Utility Technician III, Mr. Mason was routinely deployed in his WSSC-issued vehicle with GPS tracking to inspect and investigate leaks that occur in the southern Prince George’s County areas of WSSC’s Sanitary District. As a Utility Technician III, Mr. Mason had broad access to the MMIS computer tracking program.

4. When dispatched by the Emergency Call Center to investigate a leak, the assigned Utility Technician would first speak to the customer and survey the area to locate the source of the leak. If the leak is determined to be on public property, WSSC would be responsible for the repair and a work order would be issued. If the leak is determined to be on the customer’s side of the property line, the property owner is responsible to make the repair. In those instances, the Utility Technician would provide a letter (“leak letter”) advising the property owner that they are required to retain the

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<sup>3</sup> Alternatively referred to as the “radio room” or “Emergency Services Center”.

services of a registered plumber certified by WSSC to confirm the leak and complete necessary repairs within 30 days.

5. Customers of WSSC are required to utilize registered plumbers who are certified by WSSC to work on their water service line issues. The leak letter that WSSC leaves at the residence provides customers with information on how to locate a list of registered plumbers certified by WSSC.<sup>4</sup>

*3204 Dynasty Drive, District Heights*

6. In April 2024, India Cole, WSSC Customer and homeowner of the property located at 3204 Dynasty Drive in District Heights placed a call to William Taylor, who at the time was serving as WSSC's Section Manager, Utility Services South Division. Ms. Cole advised that she had called WSSC on April 12, 2024, and again on April 20, 2024, to report a water leak on her property. Utility Technician Pablo Mendizabal was dispatched to perform the inspection. A pressure test was performed, and a leak was located on the customer's portion of the service line. Mr. Mendizabal explained the results and provided Ms. Cole with the leak letter instructing her to retain a registered plumber certified by WSSC and have the leak repaired within 30 days. Two days later, on April 22, 2024, Ms. Cole received an unsolicited call and voice mail message from a male identifying himself as Pipe Pros stating that he received her information from a WSSC Inspector and asking her to call if she needed a plumber or financing options. Ms. Cole believed this "was a scam" and forwarded the voice mail message to Mr. Taylor.

7. Mr. Taylor listened to the voice mail message and recognized the voice to be that of Nicholas Matthews, a former employee of WSSC. Mr. Taylor did a Google search of the name "Pipe

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<sup>4</sup> Prior to 2024, customers would be referred to WSSC website for a list of registered plumbers certified to work in the Sanitary District. After 2024, the leak letter was updated to contain a QR code through which customers could more easily access the list.

Pros” which resulted in an advertisement for Pipe Pros plumbing company with a picture of an individual he recognized to be Nicholas Matthews. Moreover, the phone number left by the caller matched the number that Nicholas Matthews included on his resume as part of his initial application for employment with WSSC Water.

8. After India Cole’s call was received, Division Manager for Utility Services South Alison Ford P.E., circulated an email to the entire Utility Services South group reminding all employees to “never give out customer information to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.” She further stated “[w]hen issuing leak letters to customers we should not recommend any particular company or give out our customers contact information to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.” Ms. Ford concluded by saying “[t]his communication is the result of a customer complaint that is very serious in nature.” This email reiterating the confidentiality requirements to all employees in Utility Services South went out on April 26, 2024.

9. As a result of India Cole’s contact, the matter was referred by Mr. Taylor to WSSC Customer Service Advocate Stephen Billingsley. Mr. Billingsley in turn referred the matter to this WSSC’s Ethics Officer as a potential violation of WSSC’s Code of Ethics. An investigation into the matter was conducted at the direction of the Board of Ethics. This investigation identified additional instances in which Nicholas Matthews had made unsolicited contact with WSSC customers shortly after they reported a plumbing problem to WSSC. The investigation also identified Andre Mason as the source of confidential customer information to Nicholas Matthews.

#### *Phone Records of Andre Mason*

10. Andre Mason utilized a WSSC-issued cell phone in performing his job duties. His WSSC-issued cell phone number was 240-286-1163.

11. Nicholas Matthews was employed by WSSC from July 18, 2016, to March 30, 2023. Mr. Matthews served as a Utility Technician I at the Utility Services South Division at the Temple Hills Depot. Mr. Matthews’ job application and resume identified his phone number as 443-694-



9900. During his employment at WSSC, Mr. Matthews and Mr. Mason became acquainted. Their relationship continued after Mr. Matthews left the employ of WSSC.

12. At all times relevant, Mr. Matthews operated a private plumbing business named “Pipe Pros” with a publicly listed phone number of 443-699-0786. This phone number was also associated with a company named “Compact Plumbing”. Neither Pipe Pros, Compact Plumbing, nor Nicholas Matthews himself are registered plumbers certified by WSSC to perform plumbing work in the WSSC Sanitary District.

13. From June 5, 2023, through September 21, 2024, Andre Mason used his WSSC-issued cell phone to call Nicholas Matthews approximately 341 times at the Pipe Pros phone number 443-699-0786.

*507 Drum Avenue, Capitol Heights*

14. On April 5, 2024, Sabrina Tate, WSSC customer and owner of the property 507 Drum Avenue came home to find her water shut off by WSSC because of a leak that was causing damage to her neighbor’s property at 505 Drum Avenue. Ms. Tate contacted WSSC and was informed that since the leak was on her property it was her responsibility to get it fixed. The next day Ms. Tate moved into a hotel until the necessary repair could be made and her water service restored.

15. Ms. Tate’s 30-year-old son Robert Tate, who also lived at 507 Drum Avenue, chose to remain at the property when the water was turned off rather than move to the hotel. Robert Tate called his mother and told her that a man had knocked on the door and given him the phone number of someone who could make the required repair. The individual advised Mr. Tate that “if they went through the actual plumber” the price would be higher. Mr. Tate passed the phone number on to his mother.

16. Andre Mason’s phone records indicate that on April 8, 2024, he placed seven (7) calls to Nicholas Matthews at the 443-694-9900 number.

17. On April 8, 2024, Ms. Tate called WSSC to inquire about the impact the water cut off would have on her future bill. During the course of this conversation, Ms. Tate informed the WSSC representative that “the water guy tried to make a deal on the side” and recounted what her son had told her.

18. Ms. Tate reached out to Roto-Rooter and was given an estimate of \$15,000 to complete the necessary repair. Ms. Tate called the phone number given to her by her son and spoke with “Nick” who gave her an estimate of \$2,400 to complete the work. She identified Nick as working with the company Pipe Pros, LLC. When she asked Nick if he was a licensed plumber, he replied “yes”.

19. Ms. Tate testified at the hearing before the Board. During her testimony, Ms. Tate revealed that she had, in fact, hired Nick to do the repairs. Ms. Tate was able to identify Andre Mason as the man who came with Nick and made the repairs on her property in April 2024. Ms. Tate also recalled the presence of a WSSC truck when the repairs were being made. Ms. Tate paid Nick \$2,400 for the repair.

20. Robert Tate testified at the hearing before the Board. During his testimony, Mr. Tate was able to identify Andre Mason as the individual who knocked on the door and offered him the phone number. Mr. Tate testified that when he came to the door, Mr. Mason was wearing his WSSC uniform.

21. After Nick and Andre Mason made the repairs, they left a hole open on Ms. Tate’s property that she later learned should have been covered up. Ultimately the repair that Nick and Andre Mason made failed and in October 2024 Ms. Tate’s water was shut off again. Ms. Tate was required to call out another company to make the repairs through her home warranty.

22. Ms. Tate was informed by both her neighbor at 505 Drum Avenue and the company hired through her home warranty to repair the problem that the work that had been done to her property in April was faulty.

23. While on duty, Andre Mason's WSSC vehicle location was recorded by GPS and his physical presence in the vehicle was recorded through an identifying key fob. WSSC utilizes a private vendor, GPS Insight, to record and maintain GPS and key fob data. GPS data is run by first setting up a landmark at the requested address and then running a report of which vehicles entered the designated landmark on the relevant dates. During the investigation, records maintained by GPS Insight were run to for the landmark identified as joint unit 505-507 Drum Avenue. The records reflect that Andre Mason's assigned vehicle with Andre Mason himself driving visited 505-507 Drum Avenue four separate times:

April 8, 2024 – 1:13 p.m. to 1:32 p.m.

April 15, 2024 – 10:53 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

April 16, 2024 – 11:20 a.m. to 1:15 p.m./ 1:22 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Records further reflect that there were no other WSSC vehicles in the area on these dates.

24. Utility Technicians keep their time through the MMIS system. An employee's time is charged to the work orders assigned, or to a non-productive code as appropriate. During the investigation, Andre Mason's timesheets and assigned work orders for the dates of April 8, 15 and 16, 2024, were reviewed and revealed that, with minor exceptions, there was no legitimate business reason for him to be at the 505-507 Drum Avenue location on those dates and at those times. Specifically, there was no legitimate business reason for Andre Mason to be at the 507 Drum Avenue address on April 8, 2024. On April 15, 2024, there was a brief thirty (30) minute period where Mr. Mason's presence in the area was justified when he was dispatched to inspect the sidewalk of the Holy Cross Catholic Church, located in close proximity to the 505-507 Drum Avenue landmark. Mr.



Mason charged thirty (30) minutes on his timesheet, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m., for that task. All remaining time he spent at 505-507 Drum Avenue location on April 15, 2024, is not supported by a legitimate business purpose. Finally, on April 16, 2024, GPS records reflect Andre Mason's presence at 505-507 Drum Avenue on two separate visits for a total of three (3) hours and five (5) minutes. Of that time, Mr. Mason charged only fifteen (15) minutes to legitimate work orders. Much of the time Mr. Mason spent at 505-507 Drum Avenue on April 16, 2025, was charged to a work order at 13028 Boykin Place.

25. All plumbing work that involves installation, renovation, extension or alteration of plumbing systems in the WSSC Sanitary District requires application for and the issuance of a permit from WSSC. Permitting is required to ensure that those who work on WSSC infrastructure possess the requisite training, licensing and experience in the plumbing trade. A review of permits issued by WSSC revealed that no permit was pulled for work at 507 Drum Avenue in April 2024.

*3142 Dynasty Drive, Capitol Heights*

26. On July 29, 2024, Antoine Herbert Corbin, WSSC customer and owner of the property at 3142 Dynasty Drive, called WSSC's Emergency Call Center to report water in his yard from an unknown source. Utility Technician Darren Williams was dispatched to inspect the situation. Mr. Williams noted in the MMIS system that he found a leak on the property; the owner was not home so he left a leak letter and a work order to reinspect the property after thirty (30) days. The reinspection was conducted by Utility Technician Pablo Mendizabal on August 3, 2024. Andre Mason was not involved with either work order issued for 3142 Dynasty Drive. Andre Mason had no legitimate business reason to contact the homeowner, Antoine Herbert Corbin. Yet, Andre Mason's phone records reflect that he called Mr. Corbin four (4) times from July 31, 2024, to August 2, 2024.

27. On July 30, 2024, Compact Plumbers called in an emergency ticket to Miss Utility from phone number 443-699-0786 to report that it was performing emergency repair water service at 3142 Dynasty Drive. This phone number belongs to Pipe Pros, Nicholas Matthews' company.

28. Mr. Corbin contacted the Emergency Call Center in an effort to track down a receipt for the plumbing work he had done after receiving the leak letter from WSSC. Mr. Corbin was under the mistaken impression that the plumber who did the work on his property was sent by WSSC. Mr. Corbin had requested a receipt for the work from the plumber who contacted him and received the receipt via text on his cell phone. Mr. Corbin was required to produce the receipt to the court in his divorce proceeding. The receipt he received was incorrect, noting the correct amount but the wrong date of service. As a result of producing this document in his divorce proceeding, the court questioned the authenticity of the document and fined Mr. Corbin \$1,000 for having presented it. It was not until Mr. Corbin called WSSC and spoke with Section Manager for the Emergency Call Center Donna Forrest, that he was advised that the individual who performed the plumbing work was not sent by WSSC.

29. Mr. Corbin asserted that the plumber that did the repairs contacted him and so he thought it had been arranged through WSSC. In the end, Mr. Corbin told Ms. Forrest that he believed the guy was "a scam."

*2106 Floral Park Road, Clinton*

30. On July 29, 2024, Andre Mason was assigned a work order generated as a result of a call from Judith Swindle, the owner of the property at 2106 Floral Park Road in Clinton, Maryland. The work order required that a WSSC inspector "locate, mark and make sure curb stop is operable." Andre Mason reported to the property at 10:00 a.m. on that date and did the initial inspection by 10:30 a.m. Mason noted "unable to locate" and that a crew needed to be dispatched to locate, adjust and raise the grade. Later that day, Andre Mason generated a work order for that work to be done,

31. Andre Mason's phone records reveal that he called Judith Swindle six (6) times in the days following his visit to her house. His assigned work for that property had been completed on July 29, 2024, yet Mr. Mason continued to call Ms. Swindle from that date through August 6, 2024. On July 31, 2024, a male whose voice was recognized to be that of Nicholas Matthews called the Emergency Call Center stating that he was with Compact Plumbing and was at Ms. Swindle's property doing emergency service work and could not get the water shut down.

### **CODE OF ETHICS PROVISIONS**

The Code of Ethics sections at issue in this Complaint are § 1.70.200(a) and (c), and § 1.70.210, reproduced below:

#### **Section 1.70.200 Misuse of prestige of office – Harassment – Improper influence**

a) An employee must not use the prestige of office for private gain or the gain of another, or create the appearance that the employee is utilizing the prestige of office for private gain or the gain of another. Performing usual and customary ratepayer or customer services, without additional compensation, is not prohibited by this subsection.

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(c) An employee must not use any WSSC facility, property, or work time for personal use or for the use of another person, unless the use is:

- (1) Generally available to the public; or
- (2) Authorized by a law, regulation, or administrative procedure.

#### **Section 1.7.210 Policy**

Except when authorized by law, an employee or former employee must not disclose confidential information related to or maintained by WSSC that is not available to the public. An employee or former employee must not use confidential information for personal gain or the gain of another. Unless expressly prohibited by law, an employee may disclose validly obtained confidential

information to a Commissioner or employee if the other Commissioner or employee reasonably needs the information to carry out that person's official duties. Confidential information includes information that is subject to mandatory or discretionary denial to request from the public for disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act or other information determined by WSSC by contractual agreement, standard operating procedure, or otherwise, to be confidential or proprietary in nature.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

#### *Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(a)*

Based on the facts recited above, found by a preponderance of the evidence, this Board concludes that Andre Mason violated WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(a)("[a]n employee must not use the prestige of office for private gain or the gain of another"). Andre Mason used his role as a Utility Technician III with WSSC to solicit business for his friend Nicholas Matthews. As a Utility Technician III, Mr. Mason had broad access to the MMIS computer tracking program which contains both customer information, notes on the results from inspections and work order information. His continuous contact with Nicholas Matthews, including 341 calls in a four-month period, coupled with the timing of those contacts, leads this Board to conclude that Andre Mason was transferring information to Mr. Matthews about WSSC customers and projects. In addition, Andre Mason utilized the prestige of his office as a Utility Technician III to promote Nicholas Matthew's business.

Robert Tate testified credibly that Andre Mason was wearing his WSSC uniform when he knocked on the door and provided him with the phone number for "Nick" urging Mr. Tate that "if they went through the actual plumber" the price would be higher. Andre Mason used his WSSC truck when he appeared at Sabrina Tate's house with Nick and made the repairs on her house in April 2024. Andre Mason's status as an employee of WSSC was evident from his uniform when

he spoke to Robert Tate and the use of the WSSC vehicle when he came to Sabrina Tate's house and assisted in making repairs. It is not unreasonable for a customer in these circumstances to believe that Andre Mason's involvement was an endorsement by WSSC of Nicholas Matthews' competence as a plumber. Sabrina Tate paid Nicholas Matthews \$2,400 for the repairs. Those repairs proved "faulty" and ultimately Ms. Tate was required to have repairs made again in October 2024.

On July 29, 2024, Antoine Herbet Corbin called WSSC and reported that he had water accumulating on his yard from an unknown source. WSSC sent a Utility Technician (not Andre Mason) out who noted that he found a leak and left a leak letter instructing Mr. Corbin to have the leak repaired within thirty (30) days. Although Andre Mason had no involvement in the matter, his phone records reflect that he called Mr. Corbin six (6) times between July 31, 2024, and August 2, 2024. Miss Utility records confirm that an individual calling from Pipe Pros' listed phone number, Nicholas Matthews' business, called in a ticket to do work at Mr. Corbin's property.

Andre Mason testified at the hearing before the Board, but he offered no plausible explanation for why he called Mr. Corbin six (6) times in the window of time between when Corbin had been notified that he needed to have the repair made and the deadline for completion of the repair. According to Mr. Mason's telling, Mr. Corbin approached him out of the blue one day when he was flushing a meter and made general inquiries about WSSC. According to Mr. Mason's testimony, he learned during their conversation that Mr. Corbin was a firearms trainer and the calls Mason made to him pertained to his interest in obtaining a conceal carry gun permit. Based on his demeanor while testifying and the lack of corroboration, the Board found Mr. Mason's testimony less than credible.

The Board concludes that Andre Mason used the prestige of his office at WSSC for the benefit of another person, Nicholas Matthews, in violation of WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(a).



*Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(c)*

Based on the facts recited above, found by a preponderance of the evidence, this Board concludes that Andre Mason violated WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(c) (“[a]n employee must not use any WSSC facility, property, or work time for personal use or for the use of another person”).

All of the 341 calls Andre Mason made to Nicholas Matthews between June 5, 2024, and September 21, 2024, were made on his WSSC-issued phone. When Andre Mason reported to Sabrina Tate’s house to complete repairs with Nicholas Matthews, he drove in his WSSC truck. When Andre Mason and Nicholas Matthews were at Sabrina Tate’s house on April 8, 15 and 16, 2025, Mason was on WSSC work time.

The Board concludes that Andre Mason used WSSC property and work time for personal use or for the use of another person, Nicholas Matthews, in violation of WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(c).

*Code of Ethics § 1.70.210*

Based on the facts recited above, found by a preponderance of the evidence, this Board concludes that Andre Mason violated WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.210 (“Disclosure of Confidential Information”). As noted above, Andre Mason made 341 calls to Nicholas Matthews from his WSSC-issued phone in four months. At the hearing, Mr. Mason could not provide a credible explanation for this level of contact initiated by himself to Nicholas Matthews. When questioned during the hearing, Mr. Mason stated that he and Nicholas Matthews were friends and they talked generally about life, marital issues they were both having, and Matthew’s desire to regain his Commercial Driver’s License. Once again, the Board did not find Andre Mason to be a credible witness. The timing of the phone calls supports this Board’s conclusion that Andre Mason disclosed confidential customer information to Nicholas Matthews. For example, on April 8, 2024,

Andre Mason placed seven (7) calls to Nicholas Matthews. This was within days of the water turn off at the Tate house. Mr. Mason placed numerous calls to both Antoine Herbert Corbin and Judith Swindle, none of which was justified by legitimate business reasons. The fact that Nicholas Matthews was retained by those homeowners to perform the necessary repairs shortly after Andre Mason's direct communications supports this Board's conclusion that Mason disclosed confidential information to Nicholas Matthews regarding those customers and properties.

Furthermore, this Board concludes that Andre Mason "use[d] confidential information for personal gain or the gain of another." The evidence clearly established that Nicholas Matthews was paid by Sabrina Tate and Antoine Herbert Corbin. Both customers had a negative experience in dealing with Nicholas Matthews. Sabrina Tate paid for "faulty" work that had to be redone months later. Antoine Herbert Corbin was given an inaccurate receipt for the work performed by Nicholas Matthews and was ultimately fined \$1,000 by the court for presenting the receipt in his divorce proceeding. Mr. Corbin's efforts to get a correct receipt from Nicholas Matthews were futile.

The Board concludes that Andre Mason disclosed confidential customer information and used confidential information for the personal gain of another person, Nicholas Matthews, in violation of WSSC Code of Ethics § 1.70.210.

### **SANCTIONS**

Section 1.70.090(c)(3) of the Code provides that when the Board finds that there has been a violation of the Code it may "[r]ecommend to the appropriate authority other appropriate discipline of the respondent, including censure or removal if that discipline is authorized by the WSSC Personnel Policy and Benefits Programs Manual or other WSSC regulations or procedures." Section 9.040.040(d) of WSSC's Manual of Standard Procedures ("Disciplinary

Procedures”) sets forth examples of conduct which could justify either a suspension or a recommendation for release, including two that are applicable in this case:

- § 9.040.040(d)(1)(vi) - “Using Commission property for non-Commission business or conducting non-Commission business during working hours and on working time.”
- § 9.040.040(d)(1)(vii) - “Serious violation of the Commission’s Code of Ethics (WSSC Chapter 1.70), i.e., violation which causes or threatens to cause serious damage to the WSSC’s reputation.”

This Board finds that Andre Mason’s violation of the WSSC Code of Ethics is a serious violation. Moreover, there can be no dispute that Andre Mason’s actions threaten to cause serious reputational damage to WSSC. A paramount component of the public’s trust in a government agency is the knowledge that personal information maintained by the agency will be secure and not exploited for the financial gain of another.

In evaluating what an appropriate sanction would be, the Board notes what was demonstrated in this case was not a single lapse in judgment, but rather a pattern of wrongdoing. Moreover, Andre Mason failed to accept personal responsibility for his actions, nor did he demonstrate any remorse.

In light of the entire record in this matter, the Board recommends that Andre Mason be subject to discipline in the form of an unpaid suspension of no less than 20 working days or any other sanction authorized and appropriate for violation of WSSC’s Disciplinary Procedures §§ 9.40.040(d)(1)(vi) and (vii).

### **ORDER**

Upon consideration of the evidence presented in this case and for the reasons expressed above, it is this 10TH day of September 2025, by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission,

ORDERED, that the allegation in the Complaint that Andre Mason violated Code of Ethics § 1.70.200(a) and (c) is hereby SUSTAINED, and it is further,

ORDERED, that the allegation in the Complaint that Andre Mason violated Code of Ethics § 1.70.210 is hereby SUSTAINED; and it is further,

ORDERED, that the Board recommends that Andre Mason be subject to discipline in the form of an unpaid suspension of no less than 20 working days or any other sanction authorized and appropriate for violation of WSSC Manual of Standard Procedures §§ 9.40.040(d)(1)(vi) and (vii) for these Code Violations.

  
George E. Pruden, II  
Chair, WSSC Board of Ethics

### **NOTICE OF RIGHT OF FURTHER APPEAL**

Pursuant to Maryland Annotated Code, Public Utilities Article, Section 19-107 and Section 1.70.100(a) of the Code of Ethics, if the respondent is aggrieved by a final order of this Board, the respondent may seek judicial review under the Maryland Annotated Code, State Government Article, Section 10-222.