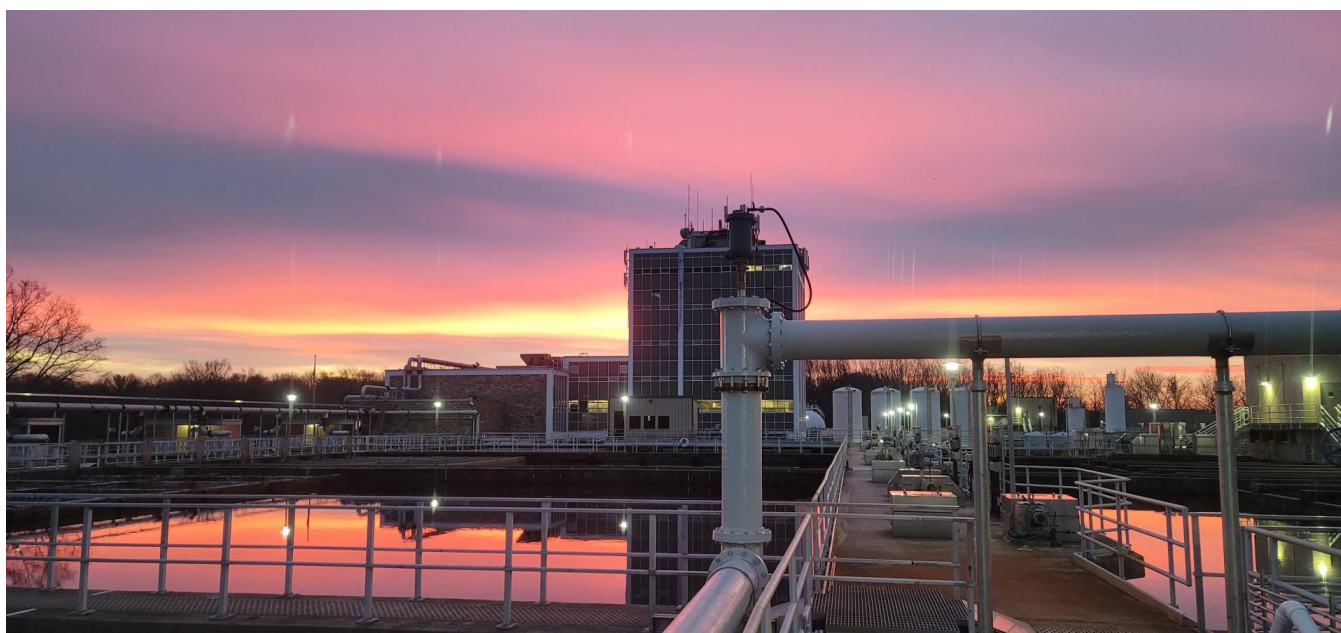




Office of the Inspector General

Investigative Report Case 385



Issued: August 25, 2026

Office of The Inspector General

Report of Investigation

Case 385

Jon T. Rymer
Inspector General

A blue ink signature of Jon T. Rymer, with the letters "DS" written above it.

Issue Date: August 25, 2026

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Review of Standby Compensation Practices for Exempt Information Technology Employees

Executive Summary

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) was established in 2018 as an independent oversight entity within the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). Pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated, Public Utilities Article (PUA), § 17-604 and Chapter 2.60 of the WSSC Code of Regulations, the OIG is authorized to investigate allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse and recommend corrective actions to promote accountability and integrity.

Although the OIG generally does not issue reports when allegations are unsubstantiated, this matter involved employee compensation practices, the expenditure of public funds, and information technology operations. Accordingly, the OIG determined that a brief report is appropriate to document the investigation, the subsequent management action taken, and the OIG's conclusions.

The investigation was initiated following an anonymous complaint alleging that exempt Information Technology (IT) employees improperly received standby compensation in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and WSSC policy, and that management authorized improper retroactive standby payments.

The OIG found the allegations **unsubstantiated**. The evidence established that standby compensation was administered through approved WSSC Human Resources and Payroll processes pursuant to *WSSC Water, Internal Operating Procedure (IOP): Standby and Call-Back*

*Compensation for Information Technology Employees.*¹ The investigation further determined that Chapter 9.200 of the WSSC Manual of Standard Procedures (SP) governs standby and call-back compensation and authorizes eligible exempt employees to receive such compensation. Accordingly, the OIG found no evidence that employees independently modified time records, received unauthorized compensation, or otherwise engaged in fraud, waste, abuse, or misconduct.

During the investigation, the OIG also learned that the Chief Information Officer (CIO) had independently been monitoring overtime and standby pay expenditures and determined that the associated costs were increasing to an unsustainable level. Effective February 10, 2026, the CIO significantly restricted overtime and standby pay within the IT Department. Under the revised practice, only groups specifically authorized by the CIO may receive overtime or standby pay, and work arising from emergencies or other circumstances outside normal operations is subject to CIO evaluation and approval.

While no misconduct was identified, the OIG encourages continued periodic reviews of compensation procedures and related access controls to ensure continued compliance with Commission policies and sound governance practices. No further investigative action is warranted.

This investigation was conducted by Daisy Qian, Certified Inspector General Investigator and Auditor, and Tami L. Taylor, Esq., Deputy Inspector General for Investigations and Counsel to the OIG. The OIG appreciates the cooperation of the Human Resources Office, the Information Technology Office, and other Commission personnel during this investigation.

¹ See WSSC Water, *Internal Operating Procedure (IOP): Standby and Call-Back Compensation for Information Technology Employees* (Sept. 5, 2025), attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

Subsequent Management Action and Response

During the investigation, the OIG learned that the CIO had independently been monitoring overtime and standby pay expenditures and determined that the associated costs were increasing to an unsustainable level. On February 10, 2026, the CIO notified IT management that effective immediately, overtime and standby pay would no longer be generally available to employees and contractors.

Under the revised practice, only groups specifically authorized by the CIO may receive overtime or standby pay. Planned after-hours work is generally to be addressed through compensatory time, while work arising from disasters, snow events, true emergencies, or other circumstances outside normal operations is subject to evaluation and approval by the CIO.

The CIO advised the OIG that these changes were implemented after his review of overtime and standby pay costs and were intended to provide greater oversight and control over departmental expenditures.

OIG Assessment

The OIG recognizes that management took corrective action during the investigation to strengthen oversight of overtime and standby pay. Although the investigation did not substantiate that the standby payments reviewed violated the policies and procedures then in effect, management subsequently determined that the increasing costs were unsustainable and implemented additional controls effective February 10, 2026. These controls significantly restrict the circumstances under which standby and overtime pay may be authorized and require CIO approval for exceptions.

Accordingly, the communication from Human Resources corroborated that the challenged compensation practice was officially implemented and administered through established Commission processes. **This matter is closed.**

Contact Information

The OIG welcomes comments and feedback on its reports and activities.

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