OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
MASSACHUSETTS

2025
Annual Report



April 30, 2026

Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG
Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
MASSACHUSETTS

JEFFREY S. SHAPIRO
Inspector General

April 30, 2026

Via Electronic Mail

Her Excellency Maura Healey
Governor of Massachusetts

The Hon. Andrea Joy Campbell
Attorney General

The Hon. Diana DiZoglio
State Auditor

The Hon. Karen E. Spilka
President of the Senate

The Hon. Ronald Mariano
Speaker of the House

The Hon. Kimberley Driscoll
Lt. Governor of Massachusetts

Matthew Gorzkowicz, Secretary
Exec. Office of Admin. and Finance

The Hon. Michael J. Rodrigues, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The Hon. Aaron M. Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means

The Hon. Mark C. Montigny, Chair
Senate Post Audit and Oversight

The Hon. John J. Mahoney, Chair
House Post Audit and Oversight

The Hon. Bruce E. Tarr
Senate Minority Leader

The Hon. Bradley H. Jones Jr.
House Minority Leader

The Hon. Patrick M. O'Connor
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Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The Hon. Todd Smola
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means

The Hon. Ryan C. Fattman
Ranking Member
Senate Post Audit and Oversight

The Hon. Marcus Vaughn
Ranking Member
House Post Audit and Oversight

Re: Office of the Inspector General's 2025 Annual Report

Dear Governor Healey and Commonwealth Leaders:

As the Commonwealth's Inspector General, I take great pride in presenting the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) 2025 Annual Report.

Prepared pursuant to Section 12 of Chapter 12A of the Massachusetts General Laws, this report highlights the work performed during Calendar Year 2025 by more than 90 professional staff members of the OIG. It is my distinct privilege to lead and work alongside this team of dedicated public servants.

When I assumed this role in October 2022, I set a strategic vision for a proactive, engaged, and impactful office. I believe the work summarized in this annual report demonstrates that vision in action. In 2025 our letters and reports addressed a range of issues, including $180,000 in improper longevity payments, lax timekeeping controls, municipal land lease agreements, and the gross mismanagement of a multimillion-dollar contract. The common thread throughout this work is the importance of uncovering and rectifying poor stewardship of public resources.

Public funds are derived from many sources, not just legislative appropriation. When any aspect of a transaction involves a public entity or resource, there is an inherent public interest. Whether a public

entity is awarding a concession stand contract at a local park or expending millions of dollars on a major public project, the underlying questions are the same: Was the contract or lease awarded fairly and competitively? Is it being effectively managed? Are contract terms enforced? And, ultimately, is the public receiving the best value for its money? These are questions every public entity must be prepared to answer – from a local parks and recreation department to the MBTA.

In addition to making prosecutorial referrals, the OIG issued public investigatory reports and letters in 2025 that have been effective in calling out conduct that, while not necessarily criminal, is wasteful or constitutes an abuse of public resources. These reports and letters include detailed recommendations on internal controls that must be instituted at both the state and municipal levels to protect public assets.

In 2026, we in Massachusetts will reflect on and celebrate our central role in the founding of our nation 250 years ago. We will also mark the 45th anniversary of the creation of this office – the nation's first statewide inspector general's office. On both occasions, we can take pride in the Commonwealth's leadership in defining the key elements of a free and fair government. As an independent overseer of state and municipal government, this office helps keep government accountable to the people, and in doing so, makes it work better tomorrow than it works today.

The Office of the Inspector General remains committed to promoting accountability, integrity, and transparency in public spending. I am proud of the work reflected in this report and grateful for the professionalism and dedication of the OIG team in carrying out our mission on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG
Inspector General

cc (via email):

Inspector General Council
Kate Cook, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Michael D. Hurley, Senate Clerk
Timothy Carroll, House Clerk
Stacy DeBole, State Librarian, State Library of Massachusetts
Susanne M. O'Neil, Deputy Inspector General, OIG
Eugenia M. Carris, General Counsel, OIG
Nataliya Urciuoli, Senior Executive Assistant, OIG

Inspector General Council

Michael Leung-Tat, OSA Deputy Auditor and General Counsel
Chair (elected) – By designation of State Auditor

Jennifer Cotter, AGO Criminal Bureau Chief
Vice Chair (elected) – By designation of Attorney General

Susan Terrey, EOPSS Deputy Secretary and Undersecretary for Homeland Security
By designation of Secretary of Public Safety and Security

Comptroller William McNamara
By statute

Michael Caira
By Governor's appointment

Dale Hamel, Ph.D.
By State Auditor's appointment

James Morris
By Attorney General's appointment

Christopher Walsh
By Governor's appointment

Office of the Inspector General's Leadership

Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG, Inspector General

Susanne M. O'Neil, Deputy Inspector General

Eugenia M. Carris, General Counsel

Katie Verma, Chief Operating Officer

Marcelle Payen, Chief Fiscal Officer

Sarah Hoover, Human Resources Director

David Andrews, Division of State Police Oversight Director

Neil Cohen, Public Procurement and General Government Oversight Director

Robin Frkal, Learning and Development Division Director

Joshua Giles, Government Outreach and Public Policy Division Director

Gregory Matthews, Healthcare Division Director

James McNeill, Veterans' Services Oversight Division Director

Susanne M. O'Neil, Bureau of Program Integrity Acting Director

Emily Pedersen, Internal Special Audit Unit Director

Alyssa Tasha, Data Analytics Division Director

George Xenakis, Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division Director

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2025 in Review

Working to Strengthen Government Integrity

The third year of Inspector General Shapiro's term brought new challenges and new opportunities for the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General (OIG). While financial headwinds and the rising costs of healthcare, goods, and services persist as a burden on the Commonwealth and its municipalities, the OIG strengthened its dialogue with state and local leaders as part of its work to safeguard public assets, review the delivery of public services, and investigate accusations of fiscal wrongdoing.

The OIG's work throughout the year reflected the vital role that an independent, apolitical office plays in strengthening government integrity. In 2025, building upon meetings he began in 2024, Inspector General Shapiro met with leaders of cities, towns, and state agencies throughout the Commonwealth to find solutions to common challenges municipalities are facing. The OIG used its informational publications, *OIG In Your Inbox* and the *OIG Bulletin* to deliver timely, quality guidance. The OIG Academy expanded its offerings and made the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation more accessible to school districts. And the OIG kept its pace working tirelessly to review the quality, efficiency, and integrity of government programs and operations and investigate allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse.

Inspector General Shapiro makes a site visit to the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy campus in Stow, joined by (from left to right) Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine, and EOPSS Undersecretary Susan Terrey.

Except as otherwise indicated, photos in this report originated with the OIG.

The OIG's investigations culminated in impactful and high value reports and letters issuing in 2025, including those addressing:

The Steamship Authority's website development project

The OIG's review of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority's (Steamship Authority) website development project uncovered a cascade of failures that not only wasted millions of public dollars but also signaled problems in the authority's governance structure. The project, which the Steamship Authority undertook in response to its reservations website crashing multiple times in 2020, involved the procurement of a new website. However, a new website would still serve as a portal to outdated and cumbersome reservations system hardware. Following multiple delays and a project cost which ballooned from $2 million to over $4 million, in 2024 the Steamship Authority shelved the project in favor of procuring a new reservation system. The OIG's investigation found that the unsuccessful project and the excessive expenses were driven by failures at every level of the Steamship Authority, including its leadership's failure to recognize the business risk posed by its reservation system, a general manager who ignored warnings from consultants and website vendors and misled its governing board about the project status, and a governing board which exercised virtually no meaningful oversight of the authority's spending.

Longevity payments made to the then-mayor of Everett

In February 2025, the OIG published its findings that the then-mayor of Everett received $180,000 in erroneously paid longevity payments between 2016 and 2021. In 2016, Mayor Carlo DeMaria proposed an ordinance authorizing mayoral longevity payments. The OIG found that DeMaria's administration deliberately misapplied the ordinance ultimately passed by the city council, resulting in the overpayments. The OIG also found that DeMaria and his administration concealed the longevity payments in an obscure budgetary line item. Inspector General Shapiro urged the Everett City Council to recover the funds from DeMaria and further recommended that the council eliminate longevity payments for elected officials, emphasizing that the mayor's compensation should be determined by the city council in full view of the city's voters.



The OIG's investigation into the Steamship Authority's failed website development project uncovered a litany of problems in the authority's governance.

Brockton Public Schools' historic FY23 deficit

In December 2025, the OIG published its findings from its review of the circumstances that led to Brockton Public School's (BPS) unprecedented $18 million deficit in Fiscal Year 2023. The OIG found that the deficit was caused by a lack of accountability both within BPS's leadership and within the school committee, headed by the then-mayor, who were all working with a budget that included unrealistic enrollment projections. BPS's financial staff, the then-superintendent, the school committee, and the then-mayor all failed to pay attention to clear warning signs in the budget. They also failed to act upon an increasingly grim budget picture and did not make appropriate changes throughout the fiscal year to combat the growing deficit. The OIG made a series of recommendations to BPS and the city of Brockton on improving controls and budget planning, monitoring spending, and more effectively responding to warning signs.

Municipal oversight

The OIG's legislative mandate spans both state and local governments, making the Commonwealth's OIG the only such office in the nation with full state and municipal oversight. Since the start of his term, Inspector General Shapiro has been committed to listening to the unique voices of the municipalities and the concerns and pain points of local government officials, and looking for solutions. In 2025, Inspector General Shapiro continued to meet with municipal leaders across the Commonwealth, discussing topics such as business continuity, public procurement, knowledge transfer, and public construction project oversight. In addition to these in-person meetings, the Inspector General attended seven municipal-related conferences and presentations.

Several municipal investigations drew to a close in 2025, including those related to unsatisfactory timekeeping practices in Barre's Department of Public Works, lax public procurement practices by the then-Hopkinton Parks and Recreation Department Director, and probable bid-splitting by the Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical School Superintendent. OIG investigations from previous years led to municipalities recouping funds in 2025. These included an investigation into a former Leyden police chief who was ordered to pay restitution for stealing police equipment, and another into a former Medfield Parks and Recreation Director who was ordered to pay restitution of over $100,000 in funds he stole from the town.

Inspector General Shapiro pays a "listening tour" visit to Waltham Mayor Jeannette McCarthy.



In addition to its investigatory and oversight roles, the OIG looks to strengthen government integrity and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of public assets through guidance and education. In line with this educational mission, the OIG launched new initiatives in 2025:

One Free Designee – Schools

Since 2023, public employees from 216 of the Commonwealth's 351 municipalities earned their MCPPO designations through the OIG's successful "One Free Designee" Program. The OIG changed the focus of the program in 2025 to make the designations more accessible to public school district personnel. The "One Free Designee – Schools" Program allows every public school district, regional public school district, education collaborative, and Horace Mann and Commonwealth charter school to enroll an employee in the courses required for the MCPPO Designation, with the cost absorbed by the OIG. In 2025, 102 Massachusetts school districts took part in the program.

Informational guidance

In 2025, the OIG began publishing *OIG In Your Inbox: Insights, Advisories and Alerts*, a succinct monthly advisory that shares helpful information on a variety of topics important to municipalities, such as establishing internal controls, mitigating the risk of accepting cash payments, and contracting with concessionaires. *OIG In Your Inbox*, mailed to mayors, town administrators, and city managers across the Commonwealth, is designed to prompt dialogue and needed actions to mitigate risks. If used effectively, *OIG In Your Inbox* will mitigate 12 risks per year in each of the 351 municipalities with relatively little effort. The OIG also broadened the *OIG Bulletin* to include a wider range of news and guidance, including updates on the OIG's municipal and legislative initiatives, insights into the OIG's divisions and programs, and OIG Academy news. The *OIG Bulletin* continues to be a useful source for questions related to Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Uniform Procurement Act.

The OIG in Action: Value Added

A Representative Sample of Results in 2025



Dollars and Cents

Reviewed $54.7 million in transportation spending related to the MBTA's privatized warehousing services

Reviewed Cape Cod Gateway Airport's use of $19.5 million in federal pandemic funding

Identified $550,000 in licensing fees uncollected by a state agency, as well as potentially up to $1.2 million in uncollected provisional licensing fees

Led investigations that resulted in more than $650,000 in restitution orders:

- Monica Cannon-Grant: $224,000[1]
- Thomas Coulombe: $20,000
- Daniel Galvis: $10,950
- Alihea Jones: $222,074
- Kevin Ryder: $85,547[2]
- Steven Stoico: $95,400

Determined that a website project at a quasi-public authority wasted at least $2 million, and possibly as much as $4.2 million

Identified $180,000 in overpayments to a former municipal official



Quality, Integrity, Efficiency

Supported the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS) in developing better ways to use complaint data to review, evaluate, and act upon systemic or emerging issues with EHS vendors.

Reviewed Massachusetts State Police Commercial Driver's Licensing Unit updated operating procedures and found opportunities to strengthen internal controls and minimize risk

Reviewed and approved 19 construction management at-risk projects with combined projected value of $2.6 billion

Reviewed Registry of Motor Vehicles' process for reviewing possible duplicate records and merging them so their system holds one record per individual

Received and assessed 1,952 complaints over the Fraud Hotline and 418 complaints over the MassDOT Fraud Hotline



Education and Outreach

Engaged over 2,000 professionals from across the Commonwealth through 149 OIG Academy classes to increase their knowledge of procurements, public building projects, and good governance practices

Trained 554 individuals in public purchasing laws and best practices, allowing those students to earn or renew their Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation

Assisted the MBTA in developing a self-paced virtual fraud awareness and prevention course for its employees

Provided in-person training to MassDOT and MBTA employees on best practices in contract administration

Published four issues of the *OIG Bulletin* and eight issues of *OIG In Your Inbox*

Fielded 1,167 inquiries to the public procurement technical support line

ENGAGE • EDUCATE • INVESTIGATE

OIG in the News

State Watchdogs Raise Concerns Over Commuter Rail Oversight

IG, auditor call for renewed focus on fare collection

Chris Lisinski, Alison Kuznitz
Mar 4, 2025

Inspector general: SSA website 'doomed from the start'

A new report from state officials found website redesign was a waste of millions of dollars.

Inspector general votes no on Springfield courthouse proposal

"[N]umerous public statements by public officials dating back to 2022, seem to be steering the proposal to a specific site and developer, which could have a chilling effect on competition," he said in a statement. "I hope that my no vote provides clarity of what must be done to ensure that a truly open, fair and competitive process results."

LISTEN: State Inspector General expands fraud outreach on Cape Cod, advises town leads as wastewater projects gear up

June 20, 2025

The Boston Globe

Serving our community since 1872

Friday, February 7, 2025

Cannabis Control Commission is dysfunctional, needs an overhaul

By Jeffrey S. Shapiro

More than seven years after the Legislature created the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission, the organization remains dysfunctional. In order to operate effectively, it needs an organizational overhaul.

As widely reported, the CCC, which was created to regulate the state's cannabis industry, has experienced a litany of problems, even in foundational areas such as staff governing the roles of the commission, the chair, and the executive director. Yet more than six months later, the CCC has not approved the charter.

The agency has struggled with instability attributable to employee turnover, vacancies, and workplace complaints. It recently took steps to fill other critical leadership positions, but only after spending more than $1.1 million on legal expenses and salaries for suspended employees.

The CCC has struggled with day-to-day operational issues such as timeliness in processing agency with the breadth of the CCC's responsibilities.

Recent legislative hearings on the cannabis industry inform this view. Industry experts and policy makers testified last fall on the differences between decentralized and centralized models of cannabis industry regulation, frequently referred to as "commission" and "executive director" models, respectively. Under a commission model, leadership and accountability is shared among commission members. An executive director model — the method of governance in bro-

House chair of the Joint Committee on Cannabis Policy.

There may still be a need for the bill's language to better clarify the roles of the executive director and the chair, to avoid conflicts.

But Shapiro called the bill "a significant positive step in the right direction." He's right.

Inspector general hears from Franklin County leaders on rural challenges

by Domenic Poli September 29, 2025

Scathing Inspector General report says marina in New Bedford is unsafe and mismanaged

Dan Medeiros and Frank Mulligan The Herald News

Updated Nov. 18, 2025, 6:01 p.m. ET

Everett City Council votes unanimously to have Mayor Carlo DeMaria repay $180k in bonuses

IG urges changes in Barre after finding ex-DPW head worked multiple jobs on town time

'Handshake deals and desk drawers': Investigation shows former Parks & Rec director violated state procurement laws

MARY ELLEN GAMBON | SEP 22, 2025 | FEATURED: NEWS



Section I

About the OIG

Year At A Glance

- Facilitated in-person outreach with 60 municipal leaders and leadership teams and participated in 7 municipal-related conferences and presentations
- Fielded 1,952 complaints over the OIG's Fraud Hotline and 418 complaints over the OIG's MassDOT Fraud Hotline
- Responded to 1,167 inquiries through Public Procurement Technical Support
- Enhanced the office's technological capacities by investing in tools such as a new online payment system for the OIG Academy's Learning Management System and strengthening the OIG's cybersecurity infrastructure

The OIG's Mission, Vision, and Strategies

Mission

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency mandated to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse of public resources at the state and municipal level across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The OIG accomplishes its mission in three broad ways:

- **Engages government leaders and employees on best governance and business practices to promote quality, integrity, and efficiency in public spending and programs**
- **Educates public employees on public procurement, fraud prevention, and program integrity**
- **Investigates complaints of fraud, waste, and abuse from public employees, vendors, and private individuals**

Vision

The OIG makes government work better tomorrow than it works today through engagement, education, and oversight.

Inspector General Shapiro speaks to a group of first-year Massachusetts state representatives and their staff members to acquaint them with the OIG's mission and vision.



Strategies and Principles

- **Engage with stakeholders to understand the challenges at each level of government**

  Meet regularly with government leaders at every level to better understand their challenges, identify risks, and develop and promote best practices

- **Deliver relevant, quality educational content**

  Innovate to educate through leading edge educational programming and audience-specific publications and embrace multimedia opportunities

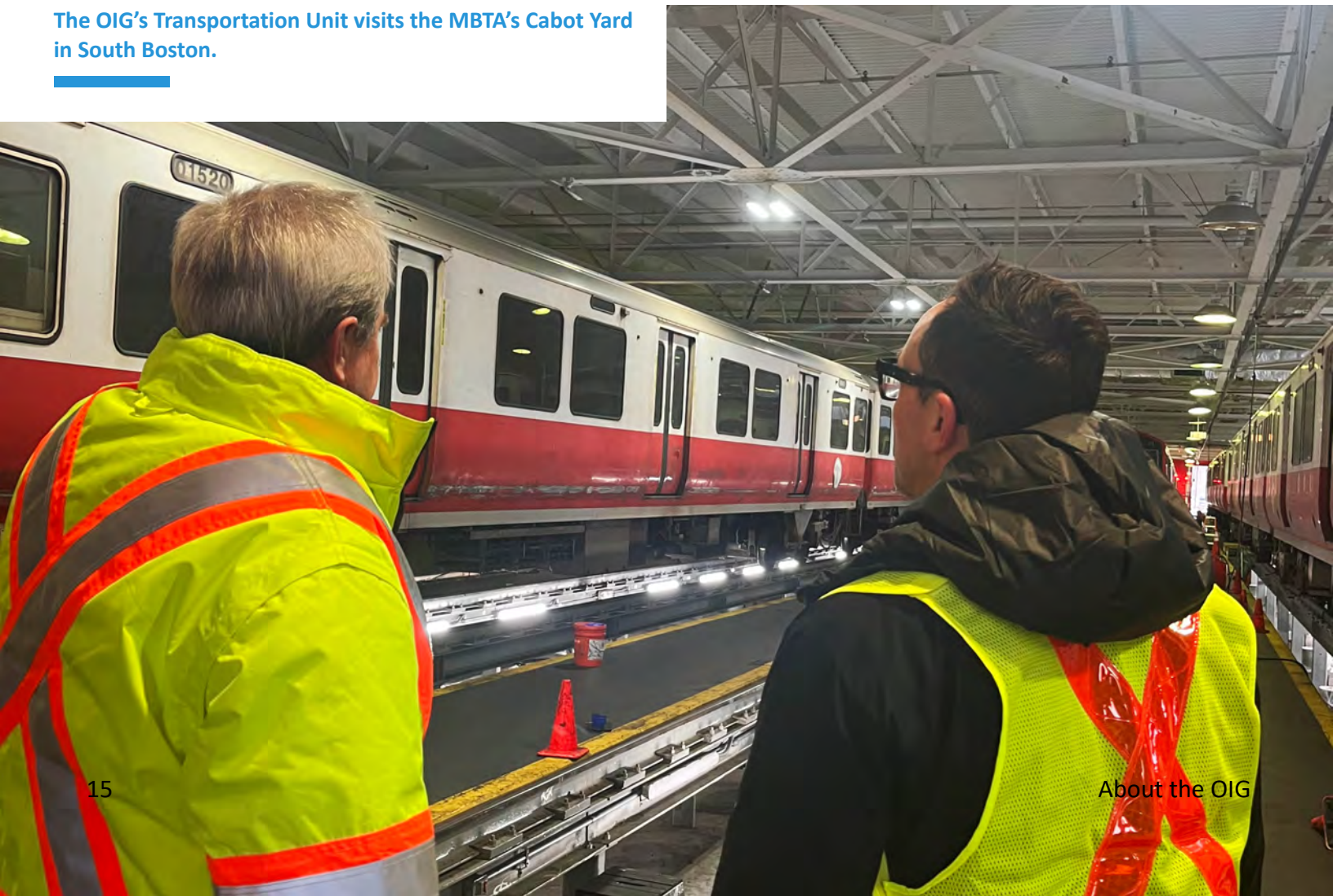
- **Promote accountability through oversight**

  Investigate complaints of fraud, waste, and abuse, issue public reports with findings and recommendations, and, where appropriate, refer matters for further action by prosecutors or another agency

- **Use the right tool**

  Employ the most effective methods for promoting good governance, best practices, and accountability

The OIG's Transportation Unit visits the MBTA's Cabot Yard in South Boston.



About Inspector General Jeffrey S. Shapiro

With over 30 years of experience in the public sector, Inspector General Shapiro is passionate about making government work better tomorrow than it works today. Having served in various legal, administrative, and fiscal roles in the executive and legislative branches, Inspector General Shapiro understands what "good government" means.

As the former First Deputy Comptroller, Inspector General Shapiro has a unique understanding of state funding, reporting, and fiscal controls. As a former Chief of Staff at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, he is committed to developing a strong team of professionals and recruiting and retaining top-tier talent to deliver impactful results.

Dedicated to the core principles of independent, effective, and nonpartisan oversight, Inspector General Shapiro is an elected member of the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) and chairs its Membership Committee. He also serves on the AIG Government Relations Committee, where he acts as a resource for those who may be considering an inspector general office in their jurisdiction.

Given the broad statutory mandate of the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General, Inspector General Shapiro works to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse across state, quasi-public, and independent agencies, as well as the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns. He is committed to working with his governmental colleagues "where they are." In addition to having met with dozens of state agency leaders and lawmakers, Inspector General Shapiro has to date met with municipal officials in over 100 cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

This municipal outreach is part of Inspector General Shapiro's balanced approach to fraud prevention that includes a focus on expanded training by the OIG Academy and unwavering accountability for those who act against the public interest. While working to hold those with nefarious intent to account, Inspector General Shapiro also recognizes that most public employees in state and municipal government are dedicated public servants who are committed to the work they do and to the communities, agencies, and public they serve.



"I often say that I want to make government work better tomorrow than it works today. This really happens at the ground level, where public employees make decisions on how to spend, and safeguard, the public's funds."

-Inspector General Shapiro

The OIG's 45th Anniversary

1981 – 2026

When former Amherst College President John William Ward opened the first public hearings of the Special Commission Concerning State and County Buildings in March of 1980, he said the story the public was about to hear was "an unlovely one" and that the Commission had found "severe conflicts of interest and outright illegality and corruption."

In the months that followed, the commission held its public hearings while the Legislature debated the commission's reform package, which included a proposal to create the nation's first statewide office of the inspector general. The bill survived contentious debates and attempts to water down the power and independence of the office of the inspector general, but ultimately the measure was passed and signed into law.

However, when the commission filed its 2,500-page report on December 31, 1980, an inspector general had yet to be named. The appointers – the Governor, Attorney General, and State Auditor – could not reach a unanimous decision as required by the legislation. In February 1981, the law was modified to allow for a majority vote. Joseph R. Barresi was appointed by a 2-1 vote and was thereafter sworn in as the Commonwealth's first Inspector General on June 29, 1981.

Since that time, the OIG has conducted hundreds of investigations into allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds at the state and municipal levels. The OIG has also prioritized education and outreach efforts on best government practices aimed toward preventing problems from occurring in the first place. Today, the OIG's educational arm is known as the OIG Academy, offering a broad array of courses on public procurement, contract administration, design and construction planning, fraud prevention, cybersecurity, and many related topics.

Forty-five years after Barresi's appointment, the OIG operates with approximately 90 professionals organized among three bureaus which together make up 12 divisions. Collectively, these divisions cover the broad scope of state and municipal oversight that is the OIG's statutory responsibility.

Massachusetts Inspectors General

Jeffrey S. Shapiro (2022 – present)

Glenn A. Cunha (2012 – 2022)

Gregory W. Sullivan (2001 – 2012)

Robert A. Cerasoli (1991 – 2001)

Joseph R. Barresi (1981 – 1991)

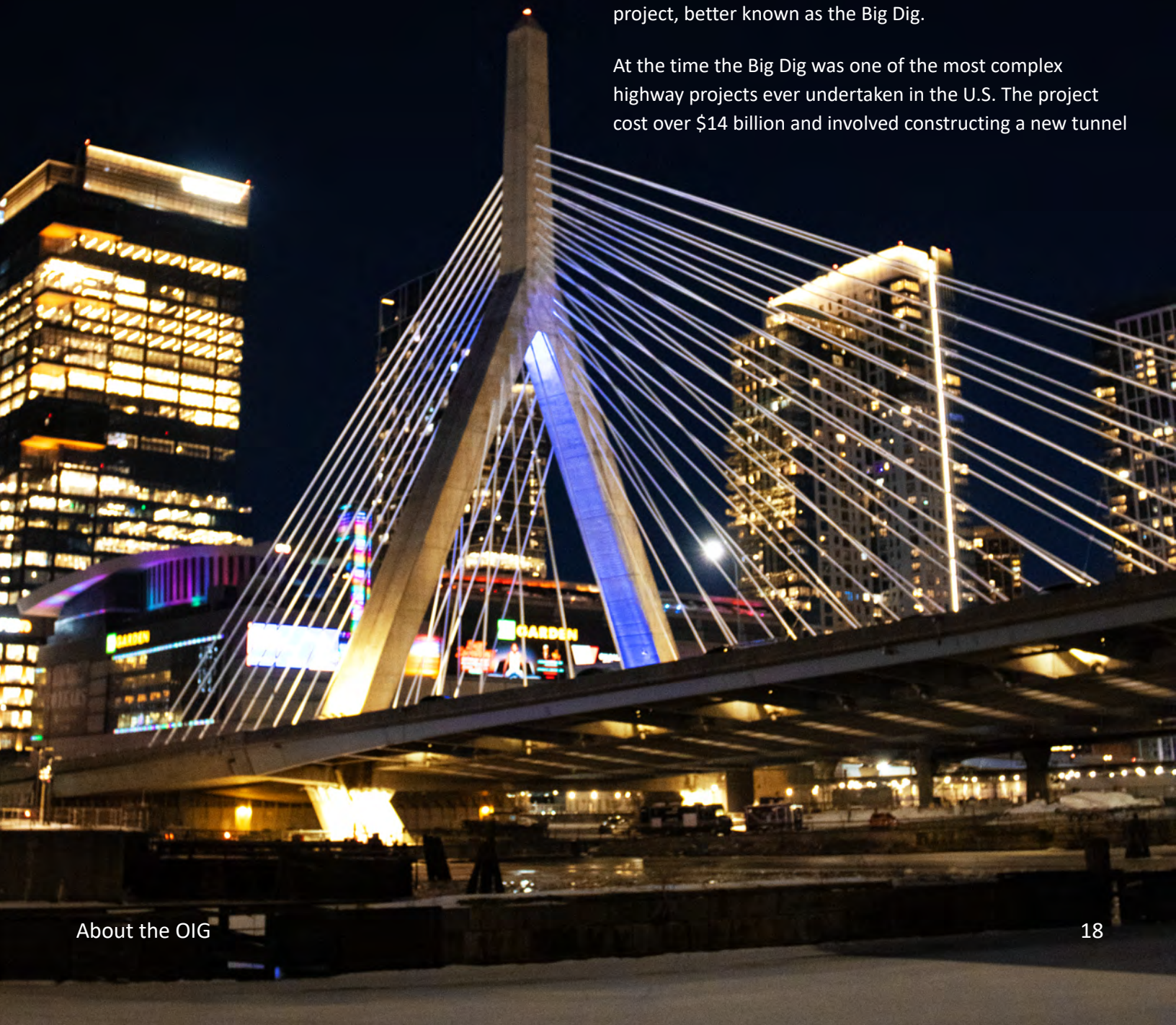
A History of State Oversight

The Big Dig: A Look Back at a Massachusetts Megaproject

The OIG has a long history of focusing on the integrity of public funds used in large infrastructure projects – or "megaprojects." The Commonwealth is in various stages of planning and constructing a series of such projects, including the replacement and modernization of the North Station Draw One Bridge in Boston and the Sagamore Bridge replacement project on Cape Cod. As these projects move forward, it is important to remember the lessons learned from megaprojects of the past, their implications for both government resources and the public, and the OIG's historical oversight of the Commonwealth's large infrastructure undertakings.

The most significant Massachusetts megaproject in recent memory is the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel (CA/T) project, better known as the Big Dig.

At the time the Big Dig was one of the most complex highway projects ever undertaken in the U.S. The project cost over $14 billion and involved constructing a new tunnel



under Boston Harbor, placing the Central Artery underground, and building a new Charles River crossing. Planning began in 1982, and construction started in 1991.

In 1995, in compliance with a legislative mandate, the OIG worked with the Attorney General, the State Auditor, and the Legislative Audit Committees to develop a comprehensive oversight plan for the Big Dig. The plan aimed to identify cost-saving measures; target potential management deficiencies; and pursue, through litigation, civil and criminal instances of fraud or other illegal activity. The oversight plan estimated the total budgetary needs of the agencies would be $3.2 million in Fiscal Year 1997, with $2.8 million plus inflation for each year thereafter until project completion.[3] The Legislature authorized $2 million for a scaled-down version of the plan over an unspecified time.[4] That funding supported the CA/T Project Oversight Coordination Commission, comprised of the Inspector General, the Attorney General, and the State Auditor.

The OIG, under former Inspectors General Robert Cerasoli and Gregory Sullivan, performed reviews and investigations throughout the course of the Big Dig and issued numerous reports beginning in the 1990s and running through 2007. The OIG assembled an interdisciplinary team to monitor the Big Dig's design and construction.[5]

In addition to its work on the Oversight Coordination Commission, the OIG reviewed a range of risk areas related to the Big Dig, including change orders, management by the joint venture responsible for the project, the material testing lab, the use of anchor bolts in the tunnel ceiling, paving, and waterproofing. The OIG was also charged with reviewing and approving building construction contracts related to the project. In this way, the OIG effected change before contracts were entered.

The OIG wrote numerous reports on cost overruns and cost recovery over the duration of the Big Dig. Most notable was a December 2000 report on the CA/T Project Cost Recovery Program which pointed out that

"History demonstrates that large, complex projects on the cutting edge of the Commonwealth's experience are inherently vulnerable to mismanagement, fraud, waste, and abuse."

-Oversight Plan for the CA/T Project November 1995

over the course of construction the Commonwealth had only recouped $30,000, in only 3 of its 92 cost recovery cases.[6] Those 92 cases represented a total of over $80 million in change orders. After this OIG report, the Commonwealth shifted cost recovery responsibilities from the joint venture managing the Big Dig, Bechtel/ Parsons Brinckerhoff (B/PB), to the state agency managing it, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. This change was followed by several multimillion-dollar cost recovery lawsuits which relied on much of the OIG's work in pursuit of those recoveries. Once cost recovery efforts were taken away from the joint venture, the Commonwealth eventually recovered more than $500 million.

Many of the OIG's findings and recommendations would prove prescient as the project came to a close. Change orders to fix problems which the OIG had identified early in the process skyrocketed. The OIG's findings would prove tragically correct in 2006, when, after the OIG identified red flags with the anchor bolts used on the tunnel ceilings in a 1998 report, one of the ceiling panels collapsed, resulting in a fatality.

The OIG's work during the Big Dig demonstrates the impact that oversight can have on a megaproject. Complex projects need independent oversight to ensure transparency and to safeguard public dollars.

Office Organization

The OIG is divided into three bureaus: the Specialty and General Government Bureau, the Legal and Compliance Bureau, and the Operations, Training and Publications Bureau.

Deputy Inspector General Susanne M. O'Neil leads the Specialty and General Government Bureau, which includes the OIG's three statutory units and four other divisions that focus on government oversight.

OIG General Counsel Eugenia M. Carris leads the Legal and Compliance Bureau.

Chief Operating Officer Katie Verma leads the Operations, Training and Publications Bureau.

Statutory units

Bureau of Program Integrity

Reviews programs administered by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and its agencies.

Division of State Police Oversight

Reviews the quality, efficiency, and integrity of Massachusetts State Police operations.

Internal Special Audit Unit

Reviews operating and capital programs of MassDOT and the MBTA.

Healthcare Division

Reviews healthcare delivery and access under the Massachusetts Medicaid program (MassHealth) and the Health Safety Net.

Veterans' Services Oversight Division

Reviews the services that the Commonwealth and its municipalities provide to veterans, including services of the state veterans' homes.

Special Funding Oversight Division

Reviews programs related to federal and state funds used for special purposes, such as COVID-19 relief funds.

Public Procurement and General Government Oversight

Reviews state and municipal spending and programs that do not fall within another OIG division.

Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division

Investigates allegations of criminal and civil misconduct in the use of public assets across all sectors of state and local government.

Office of the General Counsel

Provides the OIG with legal advice on litigation, investigations, compliance, procurement of services, human resources, and other legal matters.

Government Outreach and Public Policy Division

Oversees the OIG's policy and legislative initiatives and conducts state and municipal engagement work.

Operations

Manages the OIG's administrative, fiscal, human resources, information technology, communications, and publications functions.

Data Analytics Division

Supports OIG divisions by building data-driven analyses and investigations.

Learning and Development Division

Provides training and certification programs through the OIG Academy and offers technical support on public purchasing laws, fraud prevention, and other topics integral to good government.

Investing in Our Team

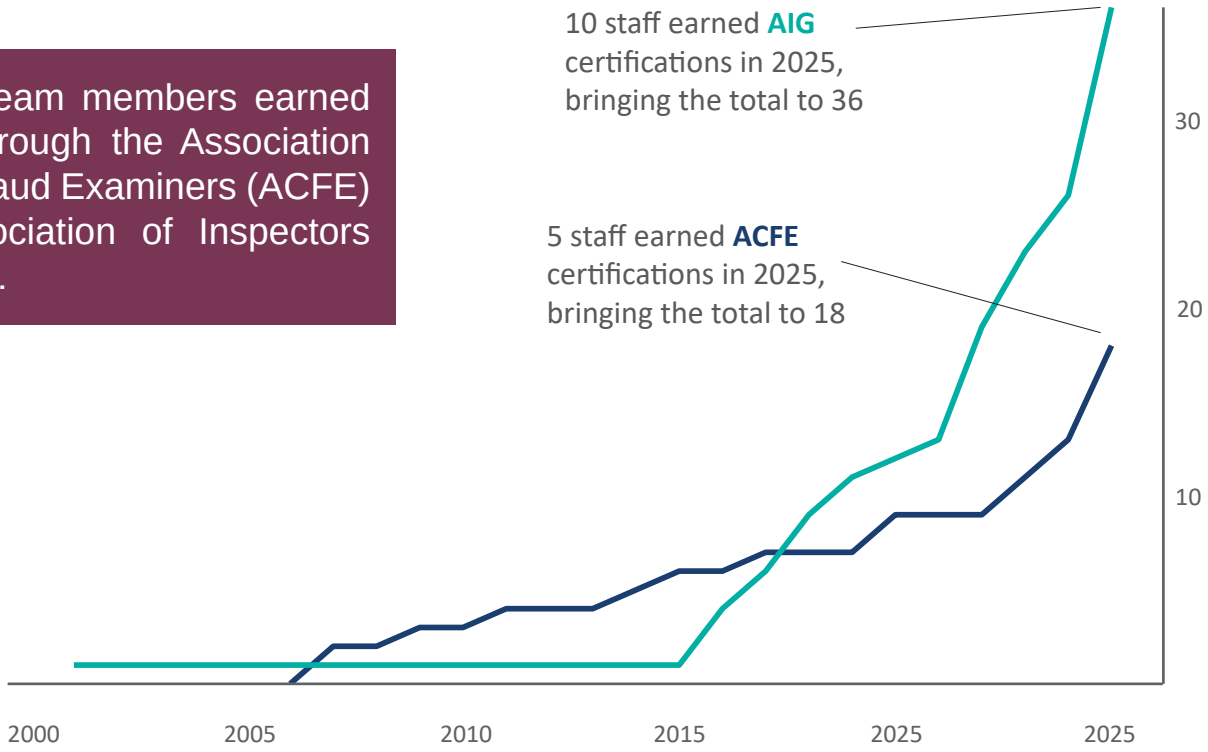
In 2025, OIG team members taught or attended courses through these organizations.

Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office
Association of Certified Anti−Money Laundering Specialists
MA Commission Against Discrimination
American Public Transportation Association
National Intergovernmental Audit Forum
State House News Service
Federal Transit Administration
National Health Care Anti−Fraud Association
MA Health Equity Compact
MassDOT
Procurement Excellence Network
Cybersecurity Summit
Attorney General's Office
Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education
Everlaw
Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
Forrester
Amazon Web Services
OIG Academy
Government Accountability Office
MassAchieve
DSL
Association of Inspectors General
National Transit Institute
American Society of Administrative Professionals
Boston College
CareMass (DPH)
Government Social Media
Boston Bar Association
Social Law Library
National Highway Institute
New England Intergovernmental Audit Forum
National White Collar Crime Center
Institute of Internal Auditors
Public Contracting Institute
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Anthology Government Teaching & Learning Summit
National Association of Construction Auditors
Department of Criminal Justice Information Services

▲ Professional Development

Certifications ▶

In 2025, 15 team members earned credentials through the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) and the Association of Inspectors General (AIG).



Leveraging Technologies

In 2025, Inspector General Shapiro continued to invest in the OIG's systems and hardware to keep the office operationally efficient, technologically accessible for its stakeholders, robust in the face of cybersecurity risks, and environmentally conscious.



LMS Payment Integration

Integrated an online payment system with the OIG Academy's Learning Management System, simplifying the payment process for class registrants.



Website Development

Launched a project in September to overhaul the OIG's website content, with a focus on enhanced user experience.



eSignature Tool

Implemented an eSignature tool for internal documentation processes and began transitioning to that tool for external processes, including in Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) and construction management at-risk (CM at-risk) applications.



Cybersecurity

Collaborated with the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security and municipal partners across the Commonwealth to strengthen the OIG's cybersecurity posture and protect sensitive data from cybersecurity risks.



AI Policy

Drafted an AI policy framework, developed and began testing use cases and working on robust internal controls to assess new uses and new tools as they arise.



IT Infrastructure

Modernized printer functionality, file storage, and other core tech environments, advancing the OIG's broader modernization efforts and reducing dependence on legacy infrastructure models.

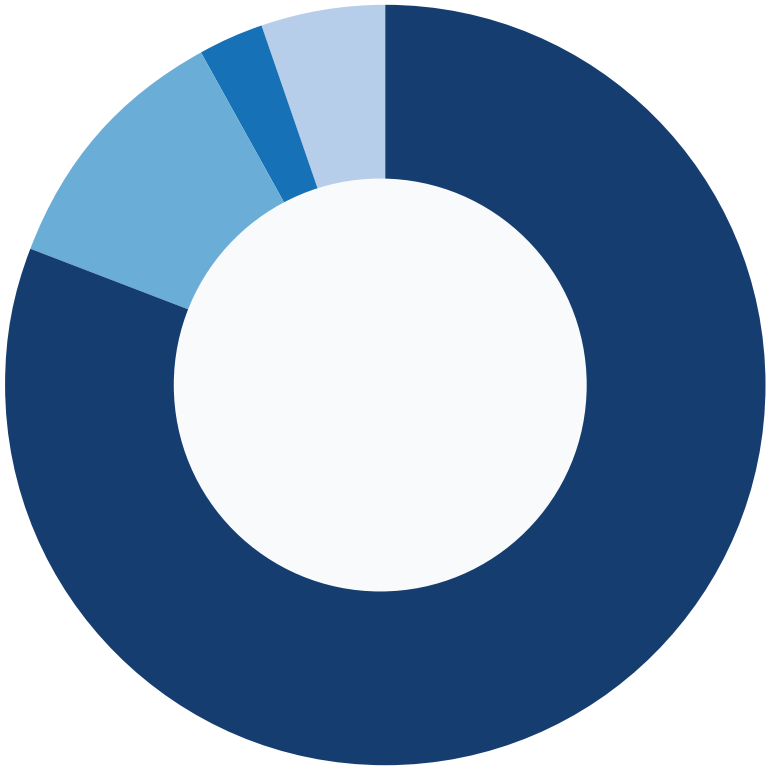


Digital Documents

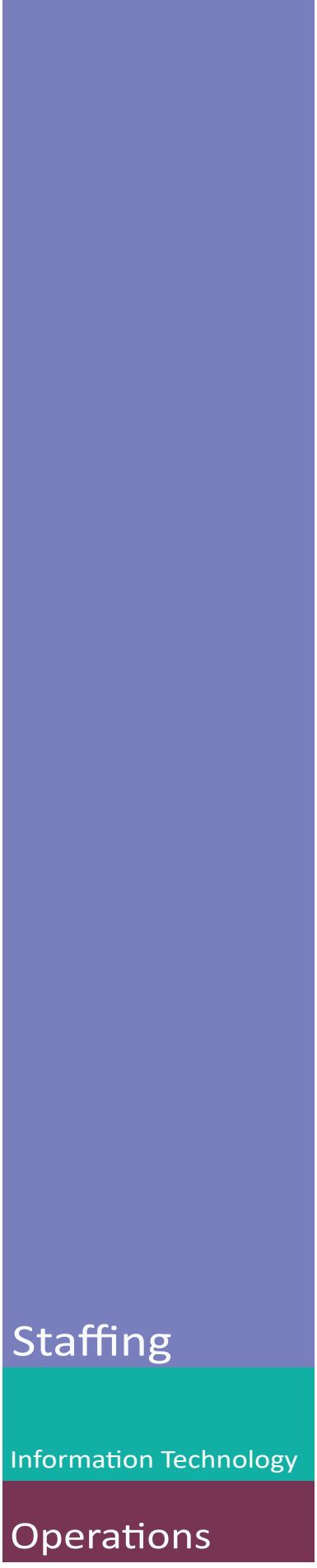
Completed migration of documents to a cloud-based document management platoform that enables the OIG to review, search, and analyze large volumes of digital evidence, while maintaining a strong security posture for sensitive investigative data and reducing on-premises footprint.

FY25 Budget

Direct Appropriations	$8,672,566
OIG Academy Revenue	$1,357,710
Health Safety Net Trust Fund	$300,430
Pandemic Reserve	$543,263
Total	$10,873,969



FY25 Spending



Inspector General Council

The Inspector General Council (IG Council) was established by Section 3 of Chapter 12A of the Massachusetts General Laws. As stated in its enabling statute, the Inspector General may consult or request the assistance of the IG Council with respect to the duties and responsibilities of the office. The council approves summonses for witness testimony and sets the Inspector General's salary.

The Inspector General meets with the IG Council at least quarterly. Agendas are posted on the OIG's website and sent to the Secretary of the Commonwealth at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, consistent with the Commonwealth's open meeting law.

In 2025, the IG Council held four public meetings on:

- February 13
- May 8
- August 14
- November 6

Current members of the IG Council are:

Michael Leung-Tat, OSA Deputy Auditor and General Counsel
Chair (elected) – By designation of the State Auditor

Jennifer Cotter, AGO Criminal Bureau Chief
Vice Chair (elected) – By designation of the Attorney General

Susan Terrey, EOPSS Deputy Secretary and Undersecretary for Homeland Security
By designation of the Secretary of Public Safety and Security

Comptroller William McNamara
By statute

Michael Caira
By the Governor's appointment

Dale Hamel, Ph.D.
By the State Auditor's appointment

James Morris
By the Attorney General's appointment

Christopher Walsh
By the Governor's appointment

Play a Role in Fighting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

The OIG relies on public input to successfully oversee how public dollars are spent and to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse of public resources. Many of the outcomes the OIG has achieved through its investigations, reviews, and other initiatives are the results of communication with the public at large.

The OIG's Fraud Hotline receives reports of suspected fraud, waste, and abuse and concerns related to state and local government spending.

Anyone can reach the OIG's Fraud Hotline by:

- telephone at (800) 322-1323
- email at IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov
- online form on OIG website
- traditional mail to 1 Ashburton Place, Room 131, Boston, MA 02108
- walk-in during business hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday)

In 2025, the OIG's Fraud Hotline received

1,952

reports and complaints.

The OIG's MassDOT Fraud Hotline receives reports of suspected transportation-related fraud, waste, and abuse.

Anyone can reach the MassDOT Fraud Hotline by:

- telephone at (855) 963-2580
- email at MassDOTFraudHotline@mass.gov
- online form on OIG website

In 2025, the OIG's MassDOT Fraud Hotline received

418

complaints.



How Can We Help?

The OIG provides technical assistance related to the Commonwealth's Uniform Procurement Act, Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws, through its Public Procurement Technical Support.

Anyone with questions on Chapter 30B can reach the OIG's Public Procurement Technical Support by:

telephone at (617) 722-8838

email at OIGProcurementSupport@mass.gov

In 2025, the OIG's Public Procurement Technical Support received

1,167

inquiries.





Section II

Investigations and Reviews

Year At A Glance

- Concluded that a website development project undertaken by the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority wasted public funds and revealed governance problems at the Authority
- Made investigative findings and recommendations on a number of matters across state and local government, including issues related to a town's public school's budget deficit; the mismanagement of a town's and state agency's marina lease agreement; and a mayor's deliberate misapplication of a city ordinance to collect improper longevity payments
- Published a statistical overview of the Commonwealth's delivery of healthcare services for residents relying on the Health Safety Net program

OIG investigations and reviews may resilt in various outcomes, including public letters, investigatory reports, program review reports, or prosecutions.

The OIG has concluded its work on the matters described in this section. Other work not described in this report is ongoing and remains confidential.

Public Letters

Contracting and Cash Handling

In September 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **town of Hopkinton** following an investigation into allegations that former Hopkinton Parks and Recreation Department Director **Jay Guelfi** circumvented state procurement law in hiring a concessions vendor for the town's Fruit Street Athletic Fields and mishandled cash proceeds from the concession stand. The OIG found that the department did not fairly and competitively select the concessions vendor and that the town lacked internal controls related to the concession stand's operation. The OIG also found that Guelfi violated state law as well as the town's policy on cash handling through poor recordkeeping, failing to remit funds to the town, and maintaining a "petty cash" fund in his desk drawer. The OIG recommended that the town adopt policies on procurement and written contracts and evaluate current cash handling policies to ensure appropriate segregation of duties and multiple layers of review.

Bid Splitting

In September 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical School (UCT)** District Committee Chair and the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding the OIG's review of UCT's procurement practices and use of school-owned vehicles. The OIG found that UCT Superintendent **Roger Forget** did not comply with state procurement law and that UCT likely split bids to circumvent competitive procurement requirements. The investigation revealed that in constructing retaining walls, UCT paid Architectural Masonry Services, LLC, owned by Forget's brother-in-law, through several invoices. Each invoice came in at less than $10,000, the threshold that would require UCT to formally solicit quotes for the project. The fact that the invoices covered similar work to the same building over a short time period suggested to the OIG that UCT deliberately split the construction project into smaller procurements. The OIG also found that UCT had no policy on school-owned vehicle use. The OIG recommended that UCT adopt written policies consistent with the Commonwealth's procurement laws, in addition to a comprehensive vehicle use policy. The OIG also recommended that DESE develop best practices to strengthen school officials' compliance with procurement laws and consider including procurement law, internal controls, conflicts of interest, and recordkeeping as topics in superintendent certification and recertification programs.

Timekeeping Controls

In July 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **town of Barre** regarding timekeeping practices within the town's **Department of Public Works (DPW**). The OIG investigated after receiving a complaint that former DPW superintendent **Jason Pimental** worked other jobs when he was scheduled to work for the town. The OIG found that Pimental worked hundreds of hours for the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) when he was also working for the town, resulting in the town paying him approximately $33,000 for hours during which he actually worked for DFS. The OIG also found that for an approximately three-month period in 2024, Pimental was employed full-time at the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), on many days working 10 or more hours at the MWRA while also working full time for the town. The town had no records to verify Pimental's claim that he performed work for the DPW on evenings and

weekends. The OIG recommended that the town and the DPW Commission improve their timekeeping controls. The OIG also recommended that the town and the DPW Commission consider proposing legislation to place the DPW under the authority of the town administrator or the select board.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

In June 2025, the OIG reviewed the **Massachusetts Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML)** policies related to **Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML)** for applicants who split their leave to bond with a child into two separate six-week periods. Applicants who split their leave submit two applications and are therefore subject to two unpaid seven-day waiting periods. DFML does not proactively inform applicants that they may appeal the second unpaid week. A review of data from DFL showed that, of the 2,192 applicants who split their bonding leave since 2021, only 15% – or 335 applicants – filed appeals for the second unpaid period. Of those, 65% were approved, meaning that applicants who did not appeal lost approximately $1.2 million in benefits. The OIG recommended that DFML update its regulations and issue guidance allowing split-leave applications to be treated as a single claim. The OIG also recommended that DFML proactively inform the public about how split leave affects benefit eligibility and include instructions on DFML's website regarding the appeal process.

Town Credit Cards

In March 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **town of Orange** following a review of its credit card practices. The OIG made several findings, including that (1) the town had no written policies regarding use of the town credit card; (2) the town accountant did not reconcile credit card statements with invoices or receipts, resulting in overpayments to the credit card company and the town paying sales tax, contrary to the exemption provided under state law; and (3) the town's payment records and credit card records contained discrepancies. The OIG also found that the town administrator issued manual checks without select board approval, failed to record those checks in the town's accounts payable software following issuance, and issued handwritten checks from the town's payroll account. The OIG recommended that the town audit its credit card accounts and create formal policies regarding credit card usage and proper recording of checks.

The July 2025 letter to the town of Barre highlighted the structural problem presented by municipal employees who work through "independent" boards and commissions. In response to the OIG's recommendations on timekeeping practices, the Barre Select Board entered a memorandum of understanding with the town's Department of Public Works (DPW) Commission to establish that employees of that independent commission are subject to town rules and policies, including those related to time reporting.

Longevity Payments

In February 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **Everett City Council** recommending that it recover approximately $180,000 in improper longevity payments made to **then-Mayor Carlo DeMaria**. In 2016, DeMaria proposed an ordinance to implement longevity payments. The OIG found that DeMaria's administration deliberately misapplied the ordinance ultimately passed by the city council, resulting in overpayments. The OIG also found that DeMaria and his administration concealed the longevity payments in an obscure line item in the city's human resources budget that neither the council nor the public regularly review. The OIG recommended that the city council recover the overpayments made to DeMaria, eliminate longevity payments for elected officials, provide details about the longevity payments to the State Ethics Commission, require city council members and the mayor's administration to be trained on their fiduciary obligations, and strengthen financial oversight within the city's finance department.

Marina Lease

In November 2025, the OIG issued a letter outlining its findings that agreements between the **Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** and the **New Bedford Port Authority (NBPA)** for the operation and maintenance of Pope's Island Marina were grossly mismanaged. In 1992, the Legislature passed a measure directing the state to lease an area "in and over the waters" off downtown New Bedford to the NBPA and requiring the NBPA to pay annual rent to DCR. The OIG found that neither the NBPA nor DCR had the records to show that the NBPA consistently paid the rent it owed DCR under the parties' several governing agreements that were in place from 1994 through 2024. The OIG also found that NBPA failed to make timely repairs to the marina as the agreements required and that neither party could account for $190,000 that the NBPA deposited into an account earmarked for capital repairs. The OIG recommended that the Legislature, DCR, and the NBPA negotiate an end to the current agreement to clear the way for DCR to conduct a new procurement for the marina's operation, maintenance, and repairs. The OIG also recommended that the NBPA ensure proper recordkeeping and administration of all current and future contracts, and that DCR likewise develop recordkeeping controls, implement a lease management system, and verify that Pope's Island Marina is maintained consistent with the specifications of any future lease agreements.

School Budget Deficit

December 2025, the OIG issued a letter following its review of the financial practices and lack of oversight controls that contributed to the **Brockton Public Schools' (BPS)** unprecedented $18 million deficit in Fiscal Year 2023. The OIG found that the Fiscal Year 2023 budget was inherently flawed from the start, containing inaccurate and unreasonably optimistic projections for student retention and tuition reimbursement. The OIG also found that BPS leadership failed to act in a timely manner when staff members raised concerns of early indicators that the budget was not sustainable. The school committee and its chair, the then-mayor of Brockton, did not use available resources such as expense summary reports to understand BPS's financial condition throughout the year and did not act meaningfully to address BPS's deteriorating financial condition. The OIG further found that the measures ultimately implemented by BPS leadership to address the deficit were not strictly enforced and were not proportionate to the scale of the problem. The OIG recommended that the school committee, BPS leadership, and staff holding budgetary responsibilities take training on their fiduciary obligations. The OIG also recommended BPS and the city strengthen their fiscal controls by creating or amending existing policies and establishing a culture that encourages budget management.

Solar Development Lease Agreements

In 2025, the OIG sent letters to several municipalities and districts that entered lease agreements with a solar development company. The town of Norfolk, the town of Bourne, the Bourne Water District, and the town of Marshfield entered agreements that the OIG found were inconsistent with open and competitive bidding processes. For example, Norfolk issued a request for proposals which highly favored the company by requiring bidders to negotiate an easement across private property that the company was already developing. Marshfield entered lease agreements with the company for six properties without conducting any competitive procurement at all. The OIG also found that some agreements that resulted from the procurements included terms which were unfavorable to the towns and districts.

Investigative Reports

Steamship Authority Website Development Project

In December 2025, the OIG issued *The Steamship Authority's Website Development Project: Poor Planning and Lax Oversight Wastes Millions*, an investigative report reviewing the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority's (Authority) public procurement and management of services to upgrade its website and mobile app. The OIG found that the Authority mismanaged the project at every level, concluding that the Authority's misstep in prioritizing a website redevelopment project instead of a badly needed overhaul of the underlying ferry reservations system wasted at least $2 million in public funds and possibly more than $4 million.

The Authority is a quasi-public organization that operates the largest ferry service to the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Every ferry ticket secured by a passenger is managed through an antiquated reservations system, which the Authority procured in 1996. By 2021, following several years in which many customers were unable to connect to the website to make reservations, the Authority decided to procure a new website and mobile app. The Authority awarded a contract for a new website. The project incurred repeated delays, cost overruns, and as of the date of this report was inoperable.

The OIG found failures on multiple fronts. From the beginning, the Authority ignored a significant, known business risk posed by its decades-old reservation system when it chose to dedicate resources to upgrading a website that was reliant on that system. The OIG found that the Authority's management threw good money after bad, ignored warnings from consultants and its website vendors, failed to recognize the limitations of its own IT staff, and was not completely transparent with its Board of Governors about the status of the project. Further, a root cause of the breakdown was the failure of the Authority's general manager to effectively understand and manage the project. Moreover, the Authority's Board, which is charged with overall oversight, failed to meaningfully exercise its oversight responsibilities.

The OIG's report called on the Authority and its Board to conduct a sweeping review of their project planning, execution, and oversight practices while setting a "tone from the top" that values employee input and respects public funds. The OIG also recommended that the Legislature evaluate the Authority's 65-year-old enabling statute and consider whether the Authority's governance structure needs to be modified and whether the roles of the Authority's leadership and Board need clarification.

Results Matter

The OIG is pleased that many of the public entities that are the subject of the letters and investigatory reports described in these pages have moved quickly to implement the OIG's recommendations and to take the necessary actions to better safeguard public assets.

As a few examples:

In response to the OIG's recommendation to adopt budget management best practices, the **Brockton Public Schools** (BPS) divided its previous $123 million budget line item for all teaching staff into over 300 lines denoting positions by school and department. As to the OIG's recommendation that the school district ensure that contracts are properly procured, BPS developed a central procurement repository, including an automatic contract generator and a dynamic form that guides staff members through the process.

The OIG's investigation into Brockton Public Schools' (BPS) $18 million deficit in Fiscal Year 2023 led BPS to adopt more stringent budget management and contract procurement practices.



In response to the OIG's recommendations regarding the City of Everett's improper longevity payments to former Mayor Carlo DeMaria, the **Everett City Council** contracted with an outside audit firm to review all payments made to the former mayor, voted to eliminate longevity payments to elected officials, and voted to create separate CFO and auditor positions.

In response to the OIG's recommendations regarding timekeeping practices, the **Town of Barre Select Board** enacted new policies on (1) time reporting and oversight; (2) supervision and approval of family members' work hours; (3) out-of-office work; and (4) conflict-of-interest disclosures. For more effective governance of Department of Public Works (DPW) employees, the Select Board also executed a memorandum of understanding with the town's DPW Commission affirming that its employees are subject to town rules and policies.

In response to the OIG's recommendations for the **Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School** (UCT) to strengthen its procurement policies, the UCT School Committee amended and added to their existing procurement policies to ensure internal consistency and compliance with Chapters 30B and 149 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Consistent with a separate OIG recommendation, the School Committee also created a policy governing the use of school-owned vehicles.

Program Reviews

Pandemic Funding Recipients

Offshore Wind Reporting Requirements

In September 2025, the OIG issued a letter to the **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs** (EEA) following an OIG review of EEA's compliance with a reporting requirement pursuant to Line Item 1599-6081 of Chapter 268 of the Acts of 2022. The line item appropriates $150,000,000 to support implementation of Chapter 179 (*An Act Driving Energy and Offshore Wind*). EEA was unable to confirm that it submitted a report in satisfaction of the reporting requirement. The OIG recommended that EEA ensure it has internal processes in place to meet reporting deadlines. In December 2025, EEA submitted the required report.

Regional Transit Authorities

Low-Emission Vehicles

In 2025, the OIG reviewed how the Commonwealth's 15 regional transit authorities (RTAs) have used public funds to bring zero-emission and low-emission vehicles into their fleets.

Pursuant to Massachusetts's 2021 climate law, *An Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy*, the Commonwealth set a target to reduce transportation sector emissions by 34% of the 1990 level by 2030. The Federal Transit Administration, MassCEC, and MassDOT, in addition to the Volkswagen settlement, have provided grants and funds to RTAs to pursue zero-emission or low-emission vehicles to meet the Commonwealth's climate objectives.

The RTAs have been working with MassDOT to develop zero-emission fleet transition plans, which are a prerequisite for some federal grants. Currently, 14 RTAs have EVs in their fleet or on order, while 8 RTAs currently use hybrid vehicles.

The OIG found that zero-emission electric vehicles (EVs) have benefits but that jurisdictions encountered possible costs and challenges that they did not anticipate.

The RTAs told the OIG that EVs enjoy community support and run cleaner and quieter than traditional diesel vehicles. An added plus, according to some RTAs, is that mechanics find EVs less mechanically complex.

According to the RTAs, their experiences have revealed potential challenges, including (1) the higher cost of EV vehicles, which may be exacerbated by the cost of battery disposal; (2) lower ranges than those of traditional diesel-powered vehicles, with ranges possible impacted by factors such as hilly terrain; (3) cold temperatures that can negatively impact EV performance; and (4) difficulties working with utilities to increase the power capacity needed for charging EVs.



Some RTAs prefer hybrid vehicles as an alternative to EVs, finding that hybrids significantly reduce emissions while better meeting the range capabilities of a diesel vehicle.

Fare-Free Services

The OIG also spoke with RTA officials about their fare-free services.

Fare-free programs had their genesis with the COVID-19 pandemic, when many RTAs suspended fares on fixed routes for a limited time. Between 2022 and 2024, MassDOT's "Try Transit" program provided grant funding that enabled some RTAs to go fare-free for limited time periods. Then, in June 2025, the Legislature passed a mandate requiring RTAs to operate fixed routes on a fare-free basis, subject to appropriations. Lawmakers allocated $35 million to cover the loss of fare revenues.

As with its review of low-emission vehicles, the OIG found that RTAs have had both positive and negative experiences with free-fare programs.

All RTAs reported that ridership has increased since the programs were introduced, although other factors such as service improvements may be a factor in that growth. Of the 5 RTAs that have seen fixed route ridership exceed pre-pandemic levels, 3 have been fare-free since 2022.

RTAs report that fare-free policies have reduced some costs, with the program reducing outlays for farebox maintenance and upgrades and for hiring armored trucks to transport cash. Moreover, according to the RTAs, free fares have increased customer satisfaction and have provided greater mobility of immigrant and elderly populations.

Speaking to potential downsides, some RTAs said that increased ridership has led to crowded vehicles and more disruptive behaviors. Further, RTAs anticipate that ridership increases, if they continue, will lead to additional costs such as the need to purchase more buses and schedule more frequent cleanings. The RTAs stated that future funding increases may be necessary to continue fare-free services.



Special Funding Oversight Division Director Michael Frieber presents at Connect 351 on strong program administration practices public entities can employ to prepare for future public emergencies.

Veterans' Services

Since the creation of the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) by Chapter 144 of the Acts of 2022, *An Act Relative to the Governance, Structure and Care of Veterans at the Commonwealth's Veterans' Homes*, the OIG has monitored the quality of services that EVOS delivers to the Commonwealth's veterans.

In 2025, the OIG studied whether the long-established delivery of veterans' services at the municipal level is the most cost-effective way to provide quality services to veterans that meet their needs. The OIG concluded from its work that the system would benefit from modernization and best practices in how, when, and where services are delivered to provide quality services and to make practical, cost-effective sense for municipalities. The OIG read with interest the Office of the Veteran Advocate's (OVA) November 2025 report on its systemwide examination of the care and services provided to veterans. The OIG looks forward to the OVA's follow-up report in which it identifies areas for improvement and recommendations.

In the past year the OIG also:

- Tracked the transfer of a significant amount of funds held in trust by the Veterans Home at Holyoke's Board of Trustees to the Commonwealth;
- Monitored the continued construction of the new Veterans Home at Holyoke; and
- Reviewed EOVS's procurement of an electronic medical records contract for the veterans' homes at Holyoke and Chelsea.

The OIG also met with the leadership of the Massachusetts National Guard to discuss issues of mutual concern to the Massachusetts OIG and the National Guard's Office of the Inspector General.

MassHealth and Health Safety Net

2025 Annual Report on MassHealth and the Health Safety Net

In March 2025, the OIG issued a report presenting a statistical overview of the Commonwealth's delivery of healthcare services through the state's Health Safety Net (HSN) program.

The HSN reimburses community health centers and acute hospitals for services provided to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents of the Commonwealth. The OIG's report presented a statistical analysis of healthcare providers who delivered medical, dental, and pharmaceutical services under the HSN program between 2019 and 2023, as well as analyses of claims volumes, the most common medical conditions diagnosed, and the most prevalent medical and dental services provided under the HSN. These analyses are meant to inform policymakers' decisions on how to allocate always-stretched healthcare funding.

The OIG determined that:

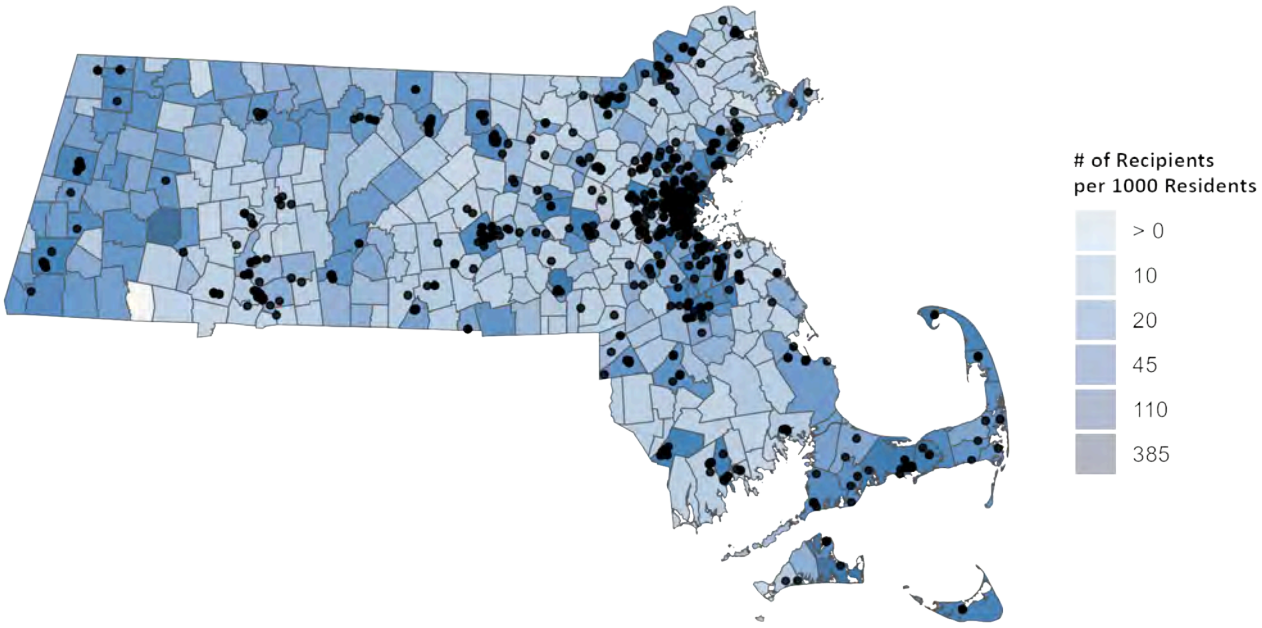
1. **The demographic characteristics of age and gender for HSN recipients remained stable.**
2. **The number of Massachusetts residents whose care is paid for by the HSN program and who have fallen into the lowest federal income level increased by 20%.**
3. **Community health centers are the primary providers of dental care for low-income residents.**
4. **While the majority of pharmaceutical HSN claims were for cardiovascular medications, the bulk of claim payments were for antihyperglycemic medications.**

The report also identified regions of Massachusetts with the highest concentration of HSN recipients during the review period, as well as 279 "super-utilizers" – individuals with high volumes of medical claims and chronic conditions. Both pieces of data could help policymakers compare areas of high need with available resources.

Analyzing Data

The OIG's Data Analytics Division supports OIG investigations and reviews such as the Healthcare Division's review of the HSN program by compiling and analyzing large amounts of data, and by creating charts and visualizations which connect and focus complex information to be clearly understood and widely accessible. This provides insight, such as, in the map below, how HSN medical provider placement in the state compares to population density.

Location of HSN Medical Providers and Recipients in Massachusetts (2019 – 2023)



The number of recipients per 1000 residents was based on 2020 population data.

Continuing Reviews

Consistent with the directive in Section 127 of Chapter 9 of the Acts of 2025, the OIG worked throughout 2025 on three reviews to identify opportunities to improve transparency, strengthen program integrity, ensure operational efficiencies, and safeguard public healthcare funds. As described below, the OIG is continuing its work on each matter. When the reviews are complete, the OIG will present its findings and recommendations to MassHealth.

Supplemental Funding for Acute Care Hospitals

In July 2023, the Legislature approved $91.4 million in the supplemental budget for distribution to acute hospital MassHealth providers that experienced negative financial impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Acute hospitals are licensed facilities providing short-term intensive care for severe illnesses, injuries, or surgical recovery. The supplemental funding was designed to ensure acute hospitals could continue providing essential

services to communities. The OIG is reviewing MassHealth's process and follow-up for determining eligibility and distribution of the supplemental funding to these providers.

HIV Critical Care Services and Pharmacy Utilization

The OIG has been reviewing MassHealth's paid claims for services provided to MassHealth members diagnosed with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The OIG analyzed fee-for-service (FFS) claims, encounter data, and prescription claims for members between 2017 and 2024, and is currently reviewing its preliminary data analysis with MassHealth to identify program integrity risks and to make appropriate recommendations.

Criminal Prosecutions

Prosecutions in the following matters that were investigated by the OIG progressed in 2025. Charges are allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent unless the defendant enters into an agreement, admits to sufficient facts, or is proven guilty in court.

Matters with the U.S. Attorney's Office

In September 2025, **Monica Cannon-Grant**, co-founder of the nonprofit Violence in Boston, pleaded guilty to 18 counts of wire fraud, mail fraud, and filing false tax returns. Cannon-Grant and her late husband, Clark Grant, filed fraudulent claims to obtain Pandemic Unemployment Assistance funds and illegally diverting donations to her nonprofit. Cannon-Grant and Clark Grant used funds solicited from donors to pay for personal expenses such as car repairs and groceries, and further concealed thousands of dollars in household income in order to qualify for rental assistance. **In January 2026, Cannon-Grant was sentenced to four years of probation and 100 hours of community service. In March 2026, a federal judge ordered Cannon-Grant to pay $224,000 in restitution.**

In February 2025, U.S. District Court Senior Judge Patti B. Saris sentenced former Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) employee **Alihea Jones** to **10 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release**. The sentence followed Jones's guilty plea in September 2024 to five counts of wire fraud for defrauding her former employer and the U.S. Small Business Administration. Following her termination from EOHLC, Jones logged into EOHLC's systems and altered the routing and account numbers for four Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) applications. Through those actions, Jones received payments for two of the applications. In exchange for kickbacks, Jones directed payments for the other two applications to accounts held by acquaintances. Earlier the same year, Jones fraudulently obtained a $187,000 Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan by falsely claiming that her business, Beauty Concepts, had employees and payroll expenses. **As part of sentencing, Senior Judge Saris further ordered Jones to pay $222,074 in restitution.**

In December 2025, **David Breen**, the operator of the Milford entertainment venue Pinz, was charged in federal court for misappropriating over $1.2 million in public funds. In March 2022, Breen applied for funding from the Economic Injury and Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which is administered by the Small Business Administration with the purpose of aiding small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Breen allegedly misappropriated over $1.2 million of the approximately $1.5 million he

received, using the funds to build a home in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, to purchase a $111,000 truck, and to make a down payment on a $98,289 Mercedes. On March 30, 2026, Breen pleaded guilty to one count of theft of government property. Sentencing is scheduled for later this year. The Worcester Branch Office of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts is prosecuting the case.

Matters with the Attorney General's Office

In October 2025, co-defendants **Steven Stoico** and **Maria Grasso** pleaded guilty in Suffolk Superior Court to all charges related to fraudulent pandemic-era rental assistance applications. Stoico filed seven false applications in 2021 as the landlord of property he owned in East Boston. Three of the seven applications were granted, netting Stoico $95,400. An investigation revealed that the purported tenants never lived in the reported apartment unit or lived there at a different time than claimed in the applications. Stoico submitted fabricated documents to support the applications. In two of the denied applications, Stoico and Grasso collaborated to file duplicative applications, falsely naming Stoico as a tenant of Grasso's husband and alleging a total of $30,600 in rental arrears. **Stoico was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison, suspended for five years. The court also ordered him to perform 250 hours of community service and pay $95,400 in restitution. Grasso was sentenced to three years of probation and 150 hours of community service.**

In July 2025, **Kevin Ryder**, a former **Medfield Parks and Recreation Director**, pleaded guilty in Norfolk County Superior Court to charges of stealing town funds. While Ryder served as director from 2014 to 2022, he stole approximately $125,000 in cash, primarily from entrance fees and concessions at Medfield's Hinkley Swim Pond. In addition, Ryder used the town's Amazon business account to purchase thousands of dollars' worth of personal items for himself. He also bought youth sports equipment with town funds and resold them, pocketing the proceeds. Over the course of several years, he arranged for the department to sponsor an exercise program at a local gym for which he received a financial kickback of more than $16,000. **Ryder was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison. As a condition of his probation, he must pay restitution of $85,547 to the town of Medfield and refrain from holding a fiduciary role in any employment position.**

In March 2025, a Suffolk County grand jury returned indictments against **Maritza Juliao** on charges of larceny and perjury. Juliao stands accused of stealing nearly $127,000 from the Crispus Attucks Children's Center (CACC) in Dorchester and lying under oath to conceal her self-dealing. The indictments allege that Juliao abused her control over CACC's finances between 2019 and 2022 to give herself raises, retroactive pay, vacation pay, bonuses, and gift cards totaling nearly $100,000. The indictments also allege Juliao stole $12,500 from CACC to pay Next Level Baseball League, where she served as vice president and her eldest son served as president, treasurer, and director. Further, Juliao allegedly paid $13,900 to CJM Cleaning Services (CJM) for carpet cleaning services that CACC never received. Juliao's longtime boyfriend, **Wilfredo Ortiz Sr.**, owned and operated CJM. Ortiz allegedly concealed his income from CJM to collect unemployment benefits in March and April 2020. The grand jury indicted Ortiz on one charge of filing a false tax return and one charge of unemployment fraud. In November 2025, Ortiz pleaded guilty to both counts. The case was continued without a finding for three years. **Ortiz was ordered to stay away from CACC, complete a financial literacy course, and repay $2,130 and $1,291 to the Department of Revenue and the Department of Unemployment Assistance, respectively. Juliao is scheduled for a trial later this year.** The matter is being prosecuted by the White Collar and Public Integrity Division of the Attorney General's Office.

Matters with District Attorney's Offices



In September 2025, former **town of Ware Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe** pleaded guilty in Hampshire County Superior Court to charges of embezzling from the town through false and inflated reimbursement requests. Coulombe also embezzled more than $24,000 between 2013 and 2020 while serving as treasurer for three regional fire associations funded by area communities to provide services and training. The judge continued the case without a finding for two years and **ordered Coulombe to pay $20,000 in restitution to the town and associations**. Coulombe was also ordered to stay away from the victims and to refrain from working or volunteering in any capacity related to financial affairs. The Financial Crimes Unit of the Worcester County District Attorney's Office prosecuted this case.

"This individual held a position of trust and swore an oath to uphold the law and protect the safety of the public. Instead, he used that position to enrich himself and divert public funds from their intended purpose. I am grateful to the Worcester County DA's Office and the investigative team for holding him accountable and recovering a significant portion of the lost funds."

-Inspector General Shapiro, regarding former Ware Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe

In May 2025, the Greenfield District Court placed former **town of Leyden police chief Daniel Galvis** on probation for one year and **ordered him to pay $10,950 in restitution to the town** after Galvis admitted to sufficient facts for charges related to his unauthorized sale of town assets. Galvis improperly took possession of police department equipment, including a Ford truck, a skid steer loader, a motor, and a trailer, and sold some of those items without remitting the proceeds to the town. The Northwestern District Attorney's Office prosecuted this case. As of the date of this report, Galvis still faces civil enforcement proceedings from the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission in relation to these and other allegations.

Section III

Health and Human Services Reviews

Year At A Glance

The Bureau of Program Integrity (BPI), a statutory unit within the OIG, monitors the quality, integrity, and efficiency of programs administered by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS) and its agencies. Pursuant to its enabling statute, Section 16V of Chapter 6A of the Massachusetts General Laws, BPI also conducts reviews and investigations of programs to prevent, detect, and correct fraud, waste, and abuse, and works with EHS and its agencies to share data related to program eligibility and program integrity.

In 2025, BPI:

- Worked with the EHS compliance team and EHS agencies on developing standard operating procedures relating to vendor management
- Monitored the Department of Transitional Assistance's implementation of federal changes to SNAP rules and the agency's work to lower its SNAP payment error rate
- Initiated a review of the Department of Developmental Services' (DDS) contracts and processes for start-up expenses incurred by vendors opening new sites for DDS service recipients and made recommendations for process improvements
- Recommended that the Department of Mental Health use objective, evidence-based factors to assess and track vendor performance, verify vendor services, address problems and concerns with vendors before they escalate, and hold poorly performing vendors accountable

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

In 2025, BPI regularly received updates from EHS regarding its secretariat-wide compliance plan. This work followed from the OIG's 2023 recommendation that EHS create a compliance program. EHS onboarded a chief compliance officer in 2024.

EHS's compliance team produced the first secretariat-wide compliance plan in early 2025. The plan lays out compliance principles, controls, and procedures and focuses on the responsibilities of EHS and its agencies in the areas of compliance oversight, program and contract administration, and risk mitigation.

EHS revised the compliance plan in late 2025 as it advanced its risk assessment and mitigation work. BPI will continue to monitor how EHS develops and implements effective and comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure program integrity across EHS agencies.

BPI also worked with EHS's compliance team to improve EHS agencies' vendor management practices. EHS agencies pay billions of dollars to vendors each year, making vendor management an area with significant potential risk for fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds. EHS agencies have had a decentralized and non-standardized approach to assessing and managing vendors' performance.

BPI identified strong, centralized vendor management as an area where EHS should develop more robust, standardized, and data-based controls to ensure that vendors are using public funds effectively and appropriately.

BPI recommended that EHS's compliance team develop clear written guidance and procedures for vendor management across EHS agencies.

In particular, to better manage vendors both within and across EHS agencies, BPI recommended that EHS require its agencies to use objective, evidence-based information to assess and track vendor performance, engage in root-cause analyses of vendor issues, and define triggers for escalation protocols.

In response, in 2025 the EHS compliance team began to work with EHS agencies to develop standard operating procedures for specific topics relating to vendor management.

This work resulted in the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) completing a governance and operations charter for a comprehensive vendor compliance management system and finalizing standard operating procedures to provide data on whether vendors are meeting their obligations in areas like routine healthcare. BPI recommended that EHS's compliance team continue to work with DDS to develop standard operating procedures in other compliance and vendor management areas. BPI further recommended that the team work with other EHS agencies to develop similar standard operating procedures in the coming year.

In other highlights from 2025, BPI:



Continued to monitor how EHS tracks and mitigates risks involved with vendor spending through inter-agency information-sharing and collaborative problem solving.

Worked with EHS and its agencies on how they can better use complaint data to gain insight into the quality of care and services that vendors provide and to improve vendor management by developing procedures to review, evaluate, and act upon complaint data showing systemic or emerging issues.

Reviewed EHS investigative reports into claims of time fraud made to the OIG, monitored EHS's refinement of time reports it shares with its agencies, and recommended EHS use these reports to identify and address systemic time issues.

Department of Transitional Assistance

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) helps low-income residents of the Commonwealth meet their basic needs and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. For eligible individuals and families, DTA administers public benefit programs providing economic assistance, including the Emergency Aid to the Elderly Disabled and Children (EAEDC) and the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) programs. DTA administers food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SNAP Rule Changes and Eligibility Determinations

In 2025, BPI monitored DTA's response to federal changes in SNAP rules that could significantly impact DTA's financial stability. BPI received updates from DTA on how it was implementing updated SNAP work requirements and eligibility rules.

BPI also monitored how DTA addressed its SNAP payment error rate. The federal rules will require states to pay an increased share of administrative costs and financial penalties if their SNAP payment error rate, which reflects the accuracy of DTA's eligibility and benefit determinations, exceeds a certain percentage. DTA needed to address its error rate to avoid penalties that could result in significant financial impact to the Commonwealth and affect its ability to provide services.

BPI tracked DTA's implementation of policy and rules changes, technology upgrades, worker recruitment, and training to mitigate the risks associated with a high error rate. BPI met with DTA office staff on intake procedures and provided DTA with recommendations for improvements to training, policies, and procedures.



Wage Data

BPI is required by law to coordinate and consult with EHS on its efforts to verify the eligibility of benefit program recipients by sharing information with other agencies and departments, including the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA). DTA uses DOR and DUA wage data to identify the income of benefit recipients and to determine whether their income affects their eligibility for DTA benefits.

Following prior work in this area, and in an effort to assist DTA in addressing its payment error rate, in 2025 BPI reviewed DTA's procedures for determining eligibility by matching benefit recipients' wage information on file with DTA with wage information from DOR and DUA.

In 2017 and 2018, BPI worked with DTA to determine how to use DUA wage data to identify potentially fraudulent cases. BPI and DTA found that by applying filters to the data, DTA could better isolate cases that might involve fraud. By re-examining the results of that work in 2025, BPI observed that DTA was still using those data filters in a way that limited their review and determined that DTA might improve its eligibility determination process by re-examining how it looked at DUA wage data.

BPI accordingly encouraged DTA to work with DUA and DOR to ensure that DTA has access to the most current and accurate income data available, especially making sure that DTA has a way to promptly learn of any changes that DUA makes to its data collection or data fields.

BPI also recommended that DTA examine related areas for improvements in prioritizing data, setting timelines for review, and adopting data entry procedures.

In response, DTA reported that it has updated its use of filters for wage data and has centralized its review of wage match data. Further, DTA is directly obtaining wage information from employers and is manually reviewing flagged cases with a higher risk of error.

Office Visits for Process Improvements

BPI is also required by law to review eligibility intake and determination procedures for public benefit programs that EHS administers.

In 2025, BPI met with DTA office staff to review the current SNAP eligibility recertification process, to identify potential options for improving accuracy and timeliness in processing cases, and to address the risks of noncompliance with federal standards for SNAP.

From this review, BPI identified several areas for DTA to evaluate: (1) how benefit recipients report self-employment income; (2) the policy for determining when self-declarations should be acceptable to verify income, employment, housing arrangements, and other expenses (3) how DTA staff document that they suspect a benefit recipient of living above their means; and (4) how DTA conducts internal reviews of intakes.

In response to BPI's recommendation that DTA evaluate these areas, DTA (1) provided additional training to staff on how to assess reported self-employment income and how to document when they suspect someone is living above their means; (2) implemented additional review of intakes completed by new staff; and (3) revised self-declaration policies.

BPI notes the candid responses of DTA staff during these meetings and DTA's engaged response to BPI's recommendations.

BPI's 2025 work with DTA also included:

A review of DTA's transition to a new Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) service vendor and the features of the new contract for reporting, fraud detection, and data analysis.

An evaluation of DTA's procedures to track out-of-state SNAP transactions. Federal rules allow recipients of SNAP benefits to use their benefits outside of their state of residence with certain limitations. BPI and DTA conducted a collaborative review of DTA's SNAP policies, data analyses, and case reviews and tested different approaches to reviewing cases that may have a high risk of benefit misuse or skimming (when third party fraudsters steal a card's benefits). The review found that DTA's verification process was inconsistent and that staff needed more guidance on when to refer cases to DTA's Program Integrity Division. BPI recommended that DTA (1) clarify definitions and procedures on the residency verification notice beneficiaries must submit; (2) develop regular monitoring reports; and (3) conduct ongoing monitoring of DTA clients who exhibit criteria indicating a high risk of benefit misuse or skimming. DTA has updated its guide to provide additional clarification to DTA staff on how to verify a recipient's residency. To mitigate the risk of fraud, waste, and abuse, DTA is also reviewing reports through various fraud navigator tools.

An evaluation of DTA's "full engagement workers,"[7] examining their training, staff collaboration, day-to-day work challenges, and the impact of recent policy changes. BPI and DTA used feedback from interviews to develop improvements in how DTA administers the work rules for the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. These improvements include (1) developing a guidebook outlining staff roles and functions; (2) improving staff training; (3) developing specific guidance for vetting program exemptions and extensions; (4) updating client orientation practices; and (5) continuing to seek and incorporate feedback from staff on how the program is working. Since the start of this work, DTA has identified and piloted new topical trainings for full engagement workers.

Department of Developmental Services

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) builds opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to meaningfully participate in their communities. DDS administers community-based residential programs, including group homes and other shared residences, with the assistance of nonprofit human services vendors that receive state and federal funds. In 2025, DDS had vendor contracts amounting to over $1.5 billion. BPI focused much of its efforts with DDS on the importance of having strong, consistent, and clear vendor management practices in place to ensure effective program integrity efforts at every level of the agency.

Centralizing Operations and Standardizing Processes

In 2025, BPI continued to work with DDS on centralizing its management structure. In its work with DDS over the past several years, BPI noted that DDS's loss of key leaders left gaps in governance, fiscal, and quality management functions. In addition, DDS regional offices often had their own operations and program management practices, resulting in a lack of integration across the agency.

In 2025, BPI followed up on prior recommendations for DDS to centralize its business functions to improve internal oversight and vendor management through consistent policies and procedures across regions.

Consistent with these recommendations, the DDS Commissioner created several new senior leader and manager positions in DDS's central office and reorganized its management structure to strengthen fiscal, quality, compliance, and program integrity oversight across the agency.

DDS completed hiring for the new leadership positions in early 2026.

In addition, as a foundation to centralize its risk-based quality and compliance oversight, DDS, in consultation with EHS's compliance team, developed governance and operations for an agency-wide vendor compliance management system with the goal of coordinating communication protocols and standardizing practices across the agency. It is made up of teams with clinical, operational, and administrative proficiency who work together to identify risks and promote systemic improvements. DDS hired a compliance manager in its central office to oversee the new system. BPI will continue to monitor how DDS administers this compliance management system.

Routine Healthcare Documentation and Processes

After reviewing a 2023 investigative report by the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), BPI engaged with DDS on issues related to the routine healthcare received by individuals in vendor-operated and DDS-operated group homes.

In its report, DPPC found that a DDS vendor failed to ensure that individuals in its group home received the healthcare services required by DDS's guidelines and licensing standards, as well as those mandated by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services' (CMS) Home and Community-Based Services waiver program. Both DDS and the CMS waiver require DDS vendors providing residential services to facilitate annual physical and dental examinations and risk-based preventive services for DDS residential service recipients. Furthermore, a 2024 DDS review of service recipients' healthcare records found that the rate of documented physical and dental examinations fell below DDS's licensing standards and the CMS waiver's requirements.

BPI found that DDS did not have a robust reporting system to track vendors' facilitation of routine healthcare.

DDS's records were not an accurate reflection of the healthcare that individuals actually received or refused.

BPI recommended that DDS require vendors to more specifically document when DDS service recipients receive or refuse healthcare services.

In response to BPI's recommendations, DDS published external guidance to ensure that residential service vendors properly document refused care and submit healthcare records to DDS in a timely manner.

DDS also initiated enhancements to the system that collects this information to allow vendors to provide more

specific information about routine healthcare refusals. DDS expects to deploy these enhancements in 2026.

BPI also recommended that DDS develop internal standard operating procedures to define DDS's roles and responsibilities regarding outreach to noncompliant vendors. Those procedures should document how to track the reasons for missing healthcare records or lack of routine care and outline remediation steps DDS should take when it identifies a vendor that has failed to facilitate required healthcare for individuals. In collaboration with EHS's compliance team, DDS developed standard operating procedures that establish routine healthcare goals, metrics, and timeframes for DDS staff and providers, memorialize workflows that include regular outreach to vendors, and outline escalation protocols for noncompliance.

Vendor Start-Up Costs

In 2025, BPI initiated a review of DDS's contracts and processes for start-up expenses incurred by vendors opening new sites for DDS service recipients. DDS reimburses vendors up to $125,000 for these costs. The process begins when a vendor submits an expense proposal for a new program site's start-up costs. DDS contract specialists review the proposal and determine whether the expenses are allowed under DDS guidelines.

BPI's review focused on the start-up costs DDS paid between 2023 and 2024 to vendors providing services to residential service recipients with acquired brain injury. BPI met with contract managers from each of the four DDS regions to focus on each region's processes and the contract managers' responsibilities. BPI reviewed and analyzed documentation associated with start-up expenses and statewide procedures for regional contract managers to authorize, approve, and disburse start-up funds to vendors.

BPI found that the DDS regions had differing practices in place to complete each step of the start-up process.

Many of the regional practices deviated from the statewide guidelines or were not efficient or effective in determining whether vendors were using start-up funds for allowable expenses. BPI also found that DDS's central office did not regularly review whether regional offices complied with statewide procedures.

BPI recommended that DDS (1) implement consistent, statewide business practices establishing when contract managers must require documentation for verification, the types of documentation contract managers accept, and the use of DDS's electronic invoice management system for reviewing vendor requests for payment; (2) require DDS regional offices to perform regular desk reviews of vendor supporting documents and site visits; and (3) regularly review aggregate vendor start-up cost data to identify patterns that could indicate issues or concerns with expenses.

DDS agreed that there were inconsistencies in regional business practices and that it could clarify and improve its guidelines.

DDS has updated guidance for vendors to clarify existing practices for start-up contracts and explain new practices. DDS has finalized standard operating procedures for start-up contract management to standardize business practices and processes across regional offices and to strengthen the oversight of regional offices by DDS's central office.

DDS has begun to provide training on the new guidance for staff and vendors and will implement the new procedures on July 1, 2026.

Food and Pica Protocols

In 2025, BPI reviewed several months of DPPC data regarding complaints about EHS vendors. BPI's goal was to assess whether the data would show meaningful trends and patterns for vendor management and intervention by EHS agencies if necessary.

From this review, BPI identified what appeared to be significant risks related to DDS service recipients choking on and aspirating food, as well as service recipients with a pica diagnosis[8] who ingest non-food substances.

BPI worked with DDS to improve the guidance the agency provides to vendors to avoid these incidents.

BPI recommended that DDS expand and expedite its work to create updated clinical guidance related to swallowing and choking events and to develop and implement mandatory training for direct care staff on choking, aspiration, and pica.

In March and May 2025, DDS distributed health alerts to all vendors that included overviews of dysphagia, choking, and aspiration. In addition, in May 2025, DDS convened a workgroup to review, update, and create trainings and resources on these topics. In December 2025, DDS initiated a "Safe Swallowing Campaign" to make trainings and resources on these issues available to the public. DDS anticipates implementing a new vendor training plan in 2026 that will include at least monthly releases of trainings and resources to DDS vendors and methods for tracking compliance with training requirements.

In other 2025 highlights, BPI:



Reviewed 18 months of invoices from two vendors that provide training, education, and data analytics services to DDS. BPI found that these vendors submitted invoices that listed only general categories of expenses (such as "wages" and "travel") and the overall amount the vendors had charged for each category. BPI determined that the invoices did not include sufficiently detailed information for DDS staff to verify that the vendors' requests for payment were accurate and consistent with the applicable contract's scope of work. BPI recommended that DDS improve its processes for verifying services and approving invoices from these vendors. Since receiving BPI's recommendations, DDS has asked for and received additional information on expenses from the two vendors and will continue to do so moving forward. DDS is working to develop tighter controls around billing and verifying services for these and other vendor contracts.



Recommended that DDS implement stronger controls for tracking when a MassHealth service recipient may be at risk of losing their eligibility. Specifically, BPI recommended that DDS routinely receive and review MassHealth's master data management reports that reflect enrollment for DDS residential service recipients. In response, DDS developed a data system to provide reports to DDS staff for review and follow up every month. DDS is working with field staff to support DDS recipients and their vendors in completing the necessary steps to ensure that individuals maintain their MassHealth benefits. BPI will continue to work with DDS to improve and strengthen its processes in this area.



Monitored DDS's transition to a new financial management services vendor for its participant-directed program.[9] In August 2024, DDS executed a contract with a financial management services vendor to handle the more than 200,000 yearly financial transactions generated by the participant-directed program. As DDS transitioned to that vendor, it encountered a number of issues, including participants' inability to access their accounts, late payments to employees, and incorrect data conversion between the old and new systems. BPI recommended that DDS closely track and record the vendor's failures to abide by the terms of the contract and withhold payment as appropriate under the contract. In response to these issues, DDS initiated an audit of the vendor's performance and decided against renewing the contract. In early 2026, DDS posted a request for responses for a new financial management services vendor.

Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) connects Commonwealth residents with mental health needs to services that will support them in living and participating fully in their communities. DMH administers community-based residential programs with the assistance of nonprofit human services vendors that receive state and federal funds.

In past years, BPI focused on DMH's contract administration and vendor management. DMH's contracts with mental health and support service vendors total in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually, and DMH must exercise strong vendor management to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of these public funds.

After reviewing multiple vendor relationships, BPI identified a need for the agency to improve its vendor management practices.

In one example, BPI reviewed the fiscal and management practices of a vendor that received over $10 million in annual funding for DMH programs. BPI found gaps in the vendor's fiscal recordkeeping, and the vendor was unable to fully account for its use of COVID-19 funding. BPI also flagged concerns surrounding the vendor's staffing metrics, a key performance indicator for whether a vendor is meeting its contractual obligations.

In early 2024, Inspector General Shapiro sent the agency a letter identifying these concerns and recommending that DMH improve its oversight of the vendor. Beginning in 2024 and continuing into 2025, DMH worked with the vendor to create a corrective action plan that included steps for improving fiscal controls, emergency plan policies and procedures, and staff recruitment and retention. The vendor completed the required corrective actions this past year.

DMH's Responses to BPI's Recommendations

In 2025, DMH's response to BPI's recommendations for improved vendor management practices included:

- Developing and implementing risk assessment metrics for select vendors. These metrics standardized data collection from vendors and established a routine schedule for statewide review and identification of trends in vendor performance.
- Completing a risk assessment pilot for the administration of the Medication Administration Program (MAP) in DMH-funded residences. The risk assessment identifies areas of strength in MAP compliance, as well as areas that need improvement. DMH incorporated the risk assessment as part of the annual audit process for all its MAP-registered sites. DMH has received positive feedback from both DMH staff and vendors.
- Creating a new standard operating procedures workgroup tasked with operational standardization and clarifying roles and responsibilities for DMH vendor management, including in the area of vendor staffing. The workgroup also promotes collaboration between the DMH central office and the area offices to effectuate consistent vendor oversight.

In 2026, BPI will request regular updates on DMH's development of standard operating procedures for its vendor management work and its use of risk assessment metrics to identify high-risk vendors.

Later in 2024 and continuing into 2025, BPI recommended that DMH more broadly apply these vendor management "lessons learned." In letters to the DMH Commissioner and in ongoing meetings, BPI recommended that DMH use objective, evidence-based factors to assess and track vendor performance, verify vendor services, address problems and concerns with vendors before they escalate, and hold poorly performing vendors accountable. BPI also recommended that DMH continue to refine its use of vendor staffing data to support its contract monitoring and vendor management work, since staffing issues – such as recruitment, retention, supervision, training, and quality of clinical skills – comprise a critical part of risk assessment. DMH established a new contract monitoring team in 2024 with representatives from all DMH offices and relevant DMH divisions (including legal, management, and budget) to systematically monitor contracts and vendors across the agency.

Department of Public Health

The Department of Public Health (DPH) promotes and protects health and wellness, prevents injury and disease, works to give children a healthy start, and ensures that food and water supplies are safe. DPH prepares for and responds to a wide range of emergencies and disasters, maintains vital records, collects health-related data, assesses the quality and safety of healthcare facilities and services, and oversees the integrity and competency of healthcare professionals.

In 2025, BPI engaged with DPH's Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) to learn more about their administration and oversight plans for the distribution of funds from the state's settlements with opioid companies. In 2021 and 2022, the AGO reached settlements with multiple opioid companies to resolve allegations of unfair and deceptive practices.

With Massachusetts expecting to receive nearly $1 billion in opioid settlement funds over the next 18 years, BPI has identified the distribution of those funds as a major area of risk for fraud, waste, and abuse, with a need for strong oversight.

Forty percent of the settlement funds will go to municipalities for the abatement of the harms the opioid epidemic has caused. DPH is providing guidance and technical assistance to municipalities on initiatives such as selecting and implementing abatement strategies and effectively pooling resources. The settlements require municipalities to use the funds in predetermined spending categories, including substance use prevention, treatment, and harm reduction. Municipalities must submit annual reports outlining the amount of funds they receive and how they expend the funds.

Beginning with Fiscal Year 2025 reporting, BSAS required that all municipalities report line-item expenditures that fall within each predetermined category to allow for routine auditing, increased transparency, and streamlined state and local data. BSAS also announced in 2025 that it had formed a partnership with a new local vendor to provide municipal training, guidance, and technical assistance, as well as to manage municipal reporting relating to abatement spending. In order to ensure that these funds are properly used, the state must have strong procedures in place for reviewing, authenticating, and verifying municipal spending reports. BPI will continue to monitor how BSAS administers and oversees municipal spending on abatement strategies and the related reporting requirements.

Section IV

State Police Oversight



Year At A Glance

The Division of State Police Oversight (DSPO), a statutory unit within the OIG, has a legislative mandate under Section 72 of Chapter 22C of the Massachusetts General Laws to monitor the quality, efficiency, and integrity of Massachusetts State Police (MSP) operations, and to prevent, detect, and correct fraud, waste, and abuse in the expenditure of public funds.

The Inspector General and DSPO Director regularly meet with MSP command staff on DSPO's oversight work. In 2025, the DSPO:

- Continued to assess Highway Safety Programs overtime shifts and the implementation of prior DSPO recommendations
- Reviewed MSP Commercial Driver's Licensing Unit operating procedures and found opportunities to strengthen internal controls and minimize risk
- Assessed State Police Academy in-class curriculum courses that cover past MSP misconduct and recommended improvements

Review of Highway Safety Programs Overtime Shifts

The Legislature created the DSPO to monitor the quality, efficiency, and integrity of MSP operations in the wake of the Troop E overtime scandal that arose after members falsified pay records for overtime shifts they had not worked in whole or in part.

In line with that mission, in 2025, the DSPO continued its oversight review of Highway Safety Programs (Highway Safety) overtime shifts and related internal controls.

The DSPO followed up on recommendations from 2024 and looked at new areas for improvement.

Visibility, Allowed Breaks

In 2024, the DSPO reviewed automated vehicle locator (AVL) data for over 350 Click It or Ticket overtime shifts worked in 2021 to see where troopers were positioned during their shift and whether they maintained high visibility on roadways, in accordance with MSP orders. AVL data is generated by GPS devices in state police cruisers and therefore provides the most accurate record of a cruiser's location.

The DSPO found eight instances in which AVL data showed that troopers were not in high visibility areas during a portion of their shift, for periods ranging from 22 minutes to 80 minutes, contrary to MSP orders and practices.[10]

In light of these eight shifts in which the DSPO found that troopers were not in high visibility areas, the DSPO reviewed the MSP's orders for Highway Safety overtime shifts for guidance on how and where troopers could take breaks during overtime shifts. However, the DSPO found no such guidance. The DSPO also found that supervisors differed in their understanding of whether breaks were allowed and, if so, what duration was permissible.

The DSPO recommended that the MSP draft written orders clarifying what breaks, if any, are allowed during Highway Safety overtime shifts and the duration and location of such breaks. The MSP accepted the DSPO's recommendation.

Highway Safety Overtime Shifts

The MSP's Highway Safety overtime shifts are funded through grants from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Troopers paid under these grants must participate actively in law enforcement efforts during their overtime shift. To demonstrate compliance with this requirement, the MSP monitors and documents trooper contacts with motorists in statistical form and reports this data to EOPSS. Funding from the NHTSA, through EOPSS, is subject to federal audit.

Highway Safety overtime shifts are typically four hours. The shifts involve (1) "Click It or Ticket" seatbelt enforcement; (2) distracted driving deterrence, aimed at preventing drivers from using their phones or engaging in other distractions while behind the wheel; and (3) Sustained Traffic Enforcement Patrols, in which MSP troopers assist local police departments to increase highway safety and prevent motor vehicle-related offenses.

In 2025 updates to its Highway Safety orders, the MSP clarified that breaks are only allowed for matters of professional necessity such as fueling a cruiser or for matters of personal necessity such as using the restroom.

Internal Controls at Start and End of Shift

In 2025, the DSPO completed its review of an MSP Highway Safety order that requires the Officers in Charge (OIC) of overtime shifts to physically observe troopers under their command at the start and end of each shift.

Under the Highway Safety order, the OIC must also conduct an in-person roll call at the start of each shift and debriefing at the end of each shift.[11] This order was an MSP command effort to maintain strict accountability and mitigate the risk of troopers not working their entire shift.

During roll call, in addition to observing the troopers, the OIC provides troopers with the objectives and focus of the shift.[12] The OIC ensures that troopers have activity reports, which they use to document their contacts with motorists. At the post-shift – or demobilization – debriefing, the OIC again observes the troopers and collects their completed activity reports. The OIC also completes any activity reports for their own contacts with motorists and completes a summary report of data and activity of all troopers under their command during the shift.

Per the Highway Safety order, the OIC is required to record the location of the roll call on the summary report.

The DSPO reviewed Highway Safety summary reports from 2021 and 2023 and found that OICs rarely recorded the location of the roll call.

To ensure consistent compliance, facilitate efficient oversight consistent with the Highway Safety order, and maintain strict accountability, the DSPO recommended that the MSP include specific blank locations on the OIC's summary report for the OIC to fill in both the roll call and demobilization locations.

The DSPO also noted that the OIC should provide a written explanation as to why a roll-call briefing, demobilization briefing, or physical observation did not occur on the summary report.

The MSP accepted the DSPO's recommendations and is currently taking steps towards implementation.



Review of Commercial Driver Licensing Unit's Standard Operating Procedures and Internal Controls

In 2025, the DSPO reviewed the internal controls implemented by the MSP's Commercial Driver Licensing Unit (CDL Unit or Unit) to protect against the risk of criminal activity by troopers.

The CDL Unit conducts testing for commercial driver's licenses and school bus licenses pursuant to a memorandum of understanding with the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). The Unit also provides training and license testing for state employees who operate commercial vehicles, including troopers assigned to other MSP sections, the MBTA, regional transit authorities, and other state, county, and local law enforcement authorities. The CDL Unit administers the commercial driver's license examinations at designated locations throughout the state.

In January 2024, several troopers of the CDL Unit were the subject of criminal charges resulting from a federal investigation that began in February 2023. The charges allege that the CDL Unit troopers, in exchange for bribes, conspired with others to give preferential treatment to certain CDL applicants who otherwise may not have secured a commercial driver's license. The MSP began a review of the CDL Unit immediately after learning of the ongoing federal investigation. In that review, the MSP assessed staffing assignments, daily work practices, training procedures, detail assignments, and administrative recordkeeping. As a result of its review, the MSP implemented several reforms, including requirements that all Unit members wear body-worn cameras to record commercial driver's license examinations and that supervisors increase unannounced visits to CDL Unit sites throughout the Commonwealth.

In 2025, the DSPO reviewed the operations of the CDL Unit as well as the implementation of the new MSP internal controls for body-worn cameras and CDL Unit site inspections.

The DSPO found that requiring CDL Unit members to record CDL examinations on the body-worn cameras is a strong internal control that allows supervisors to observe all testing. Giving supervisors this capability is a way to ensure that applicants met the requirements and passed the test for a CDL and also provides a means to monitor compliance with the examination process. Likewise, unannounced supervisor visits offer an additional layer of appropriate oversight. The DSPO found that these internal controls mitigate the type of risk that led to the federal charges.

In its review of the CDL Unit's 2024 Daily Administrative Journals, the DSPO found that (1) troopers are consistently recording and saving body-worn camera footage of CDL exams; (2) supervisors are reviewing random body-worn camera footage of CDL exams; and (3) supervisors are conducting unannounced visits to various CDL examination sites. However, the DSPO found no indication in the Daily Administrative Journals that the Unit Commander was participating in unannounced visits or reviewing body-worn camera footage.

To strengthen the MSP's internal controls, the DSPO recommended that (1) the CDL Unit codify unannounced visits and review of body-worn cameras into the CDL Unit's standard operating

procedures and assign those duties to specific supervisors in the Unit; and (2) the CDL Unit codify into the standard operating procedures a requirement that the Unit Commander take an active role in conducting periodic unannounced site visits, as well as reviewing body-worn camera footage.

The MSP accepted the DSPO's recommendations and is currently taking steps toward implementation.

Review of MSP Staff Inspections Processes

The DSPO reviewed the MSP's staff inspection processes as administered by its Office of Professional Integrity and Accountability (OPIA).

To keep the command staff informed about the quality of the department's services, MSP rules require the OPIA to audit and inspect all units in the agency every three years. The MSP uses uniform standards for conducting staff inspections and examines uniform areas across all units and sections, such as attendance, payroll, training requirements, cells, booking areas, detainee security, seized currency and property, and vehicles and equipment.

When the OPIA conducts staff inspections, it records whether each MSP division, section, or unit is "in compliance" or "not in compliance" with each area of inspection. The OPIA then generates a report and the commander of the inspected unit is responsible for submitting a responsive report outlining the specific actions the unit has taken to correct deficiencies the OPIA noted in the inspection. The commander of the unit must submit their responsive report within 30 days to the appropriate division commander, with a copy to the Division Commander of Standards and Training.

The DSPO met with the OPIA about staff inspection practices and procedures, reviewed standard operating procedures, orders, and standards, and examined all 2024 staff inspection reports, as well as a sampling of reports from 2012 through 2019.

Law Enforcement Staff Inspections

Staff inspections are an integral part of the control and management of a sworn law enforcement organization. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and its National Law Enforcement Policy Center, "staff inspections are designed to keep the Chief Executive Officer informed about issues related primarily to the agency's accomplishment of its mission and goals within the context of individual operational units."[13] The IACP's Model Policy for Inspections states, "When conducted properly, inspections enable managers to assess the Department's ability to perform its mission and provide them with the information necessary to plan for the improvement of the department's operations."[14]

The DSPO found that, overall, the OPIA's practices and procedures surrounding staff inspections are sound, but could be improved.

A key element of effective staff inspections is the objectivity of the individuals conducting the inspection. The IACP's best practices stress that individuals who

conduct staff inspections for any law enforcement agency should not be assigned to the division, section, or unit under review. The MSP follows this best practice of conducting all inspections outside of the operational chain of command of each unit by placing all staff inspections under the control of the OPIA.

The DSPO also found that (1) the procedures governing staff inspections and areas of inspection, while uniform and consistent, are not aligned to the specific mission of individual MSP units; (2) a significant number of units were not inspected consistent with the MSP's own three-year mandated frequency; (3) the OPIA's staff inspection processes do not incorporate adequate post-inspection monitoring and follow-up to ensure that deficiencies are corrected; and (4) the binary nature of staff inspections reporting of "in compliance" or "not in compliance" presents an opportunity to conduct data-driven analyses of deficiencies and compliance across the divisions of the MSP and better inform the colonel and the command staff on the quality of services.

The DSPO made several recommendations to the OPIA to increase the integrity and efficacy of the staff inspections processes: (1) tailor staff inspection processes and areas of inspection to the specific mission of each MSP unit, better enabling the colonel and command staff to assess each unit's ability to perform its particular mission, and provide distinct information to rectify deficiencies and plan for the improvement of the department's operations; (2) strategize solutions to ensure that staff inspections are conducted consistently with the MSP's own mandated timelines and prioritize completing the backlog of staff inspections as soon as possible; (3) incorporate post-inspection follow-up procedures into OPIA's standard operating procedures, including time standards to correct deficiencies; and (4) conduct an annual analysis at the command staff level to identify common deficiencies or problematic trends across different divisions based on an assessment of the staff inspections conducted over the course of the year.

The MSP accepted the recommendations and is currently working to implement them.

Review of In-Class State Police Academy Curriculum Materials

Course Reviews

In 2025, the DSPO reviewed how the MSP teaches and trains new recruits about past overtime abuse, specifically in reference to the overtime abuse scandal of the now-disbanded Troop E.

The DSPO evaluated curriculum materials, including lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, and audio recordings, that were used at the State Police Academy (SPA) for the 87th through the 91st Recruit Training Troops (RTT). To complete this review, the DSPO analyzed the class materials from the History of the MSP, Ethics, Office of Professional Integrity and Accountability (OPIA), and Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) courses. The courses encompass subject matter that would align with lessons learned from the MSP's past overtime abuse. The DSPO also spoke with members of the Division of Standards, Training and Professionalism (DSTP) involved in the SPA curriculum and reviewed surveys submitted by recruits after participating in these courses.

The DSPO examined the class materials for references to overtime abuse within the MSP's former Troop E. In 2018, the MSP's Troop E was disbanded after dozens of troopers claimed unworked overtime. Several troopers were

criminally charged and dozens were disciplined. Following the discovery of overtime abuse in Troop E, the MSP instituted several changes, including making policy updates to increase oversight, activating GPS technology in all cruisers, and initiating a Body-Worn Camera Pilot Program. The overtime abuse scandal in Troop E also led to the creation of the DSPO.

In conducting its review of the MSP curriculum, the DSPO sought to determine how the MSP referenced past issues of overtime abuse in Troop E and how instructors taught and trained recruits in this regard.

For all courses, the DSPO found no references to Troop E overtime abuse in written lesson plans.

The DSPO also made the following findings in each course.

The History of the MSP

According to its lesson plan, the primary purpose of the History of the MSP course is to give recruits "a basic understanding of the history of the Massachusetts State Police from its origins in 1865 to modern times." The DSPO found that both the audio recording of the course and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation provided a positive, detailed history of the MSP by highlighting past members' honorable work. However, the course made no reference to the MSP's past issues of overtime abuse in Troop E.

Ethics

According to its lesson plan, the goal of the Ethics course is to "provide students with an understanding of potential complexities related to ethical decision making and problem solving in law enforcement situations." After reviewing the audio recording of the course and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation, the DSPO found that these materials provided a diverse account of ethical challenges that members and recruits face, both on and off duty. In the course's PowerPoint presentation, the DSPO found two photos that appear to suggest that several troopers were dishonorably discharged as a result of a Troop E overtime audit. One depicts a photo of a former United States Attorney under the headline "2 State Police Supervisors Charged in Alleged Fraud Scheme." The other photo shows a headline reading "14 Massachusetts State Troopers Dishonorably Discharged in the Past Year" with a list of the names of troopers and their offenses. Some of these 14 troopers were discharged as a result of the Troop E overtime audit. Given these photos, the DSPO acknowledges that the course makes a passing reference to the Troop E overtime scandal, but the DSPO found no audio or written explanation of the circumstances of these discharges. Overall, the DSPO found that the course does not include a substantive discussion of the Troop E overtime abuse scandal.

Office of Professional Integrity and Accountability (OPIA)

The purpose of the Office of Professional Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) course is to instruct the recruits on the purpose and function of the OPIA, a department within the MSP that investigates allegations of serious misconduct by department employees. Cases of serious misconduct covered in the course generally include corruption, criminal conduct, use of excessive force, and civil rights violations. The DSPO examined the PowerPoint slides and class recordings from the OPIA course to determine if the MSP instructors are educating the recruits on past overtime abuse.

The DSPO found that the OPIA's PowerPoint slides did not address past overtime abuse in Troop E. The audio recording did have a brief reference and narrative about past overtime abuse in the context of payroll audit.[15]

Active Bystandership in Law Enforcement (ABLE)

The goal of the Active Bystandership in Law Enforcement (ABLE) course is to "introduce and facilitate buy-in for active bystander leadership in law enforcement, discuss the science supporting ABLE, and learn several tactics to intervene effectively."

The DSPO found that the course's audio recording and accompanying PowerPoint slides provided recruits with instruction regarding the principles of active bystandership. The course uses several case studies from other departments across the country as a tool to teach recruits about the importance of peer intervention as a means to quell or prevent misconduct, promote the positive reputation of the MSP, and promote loyalty by doing the right thing. Nothing in the lesson plan or slides, however, referenced past overtime abuse, although the instructor did make a brief verbal reference to the "Turnpike scandal."[16]

Recommendations for Improvement

The overtime abuse on the Massachusetts Turnpike was a significant moment in the MSP's history, which led to the abolishment of Troop E, the criminal conviction of several members, the termination or suspension of many more, and the legislative creation of the DSPO.

Accordingly, as foundational elements to the future careers of all recruits, the MSP should be addressing the Troop E overtime scandal early, directly, and consistently to instill lessons learned and risk mitigation principles.

National trends of "Monday morning quarterbacking" in recruit training also support an approach of reviewing past instances of misconduct and searching for ways to teach and train comprehensively to minimize risk. Monday morning quarterbacking is a concept recognized by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). PERF states that "Monday Morning Quarterbacking can instill the concepts of risk management early in an officer's career" and that "[i]f this mindset is presented and reinforced in the academy, it's more likely to stick throughout an officer's career." PERF emphasizes that Monday morning quarterbacking teaches recruits that it is critical to learn from mistakes and to continuously work to improve performance.

By embracing Monday morning quarterbacking, the MSP would set an appropriate "tone at the top" and would teach recruits that they are part of an organization that acknowledges past misconduct, is accountable for its actions, and is constantly trying to learn from and improve upon past misconduct. Instilling this mindset in current members and future recruits would benefit the MSP.

After its review of the MSP's curriculum and PERF's law enforcement directives, the DSPO recommended that the MSP (1) include clear, written references and instructions regarding overtime abuse in the goals and objectives of all appropriate lesson plans, corresponding PowerPoint slides, or other teaching aids; and (2) consider teaching objectives regarding overtime abuse that align with appropriate courses in its SPA curriculum and incorporate more cohesive factual references that instructors are already sharing.

These recommendations would ensure consistent and comprehensive training for recruits and minimize already known risks that have had a significant negative impact on the MSP.

Since the DSPO made its recommendations, the MSP has introduced a course in its training for newly promoted sergeants and lieutenants. The course presents negative events involving misconduct by MSP troopers from 1988 through 2025 and highlights lessons learned.

Review of Changes to MSP Policies as a Result of the Accreditation Process

As part of its statutory mandate under Section 73 of Chapter 22C of the Massachusetts General Laws, the DSPO is charged with monitoring the MSP's efforts to achieve certification or accreditation by a state or national law enforcement accrediting agency. The DSPO is required to monitor policy changes the MSP institutes as a result of these efforts.

In 2025, the DSPO reviewed MSP post-accreditation policy changes related to detainees and investigations.

Certification and Accreditation

The MSP achieved full accreditation through the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC) on December 21, 2022.[17]

Both the certification and accreditation processes for any police organization, regardless of size, generally consists of two components: (1) establishing administrative and operational standards for the police organization; and (2) assessing the police organization to ensure it meets these standards. This generally entails a top-to-bottom internal review of the organization and, when necessary, a revision of the organization's policies and procedures, followed by an external peer review by the certifying or accrediting body.

MPAC is the sole arbiter of state certification and accreditation of police agencies within the Commonwealth.[18] MPAC's operational and administrative standards reflect national best practices in police management, administration, operations, and support services. MPAC offers two professional credentialing programs: certification and accreditation. Accreditation is the higher of the two program awards. Certification is a significant milestone toward accreditation.[19]

Policies on Detainees and Investigations

Since the MSP attained full accreditation, the DSPO has reviewed policy changes instituted through the certification and accreditation processes.

In 2025, the DSPO analyzed the MSP's training curriculum and lesson plans for current members of the MSP and trainees at the State Police Academy to determine if policy changes regarding detainees had been integrated. The DSPO confirmed that the MSP's curriculum and lesson plans reflected all policy changes regarding detainees instituted as a result of the MSP's certification and accreditation standards.

The DSPO also reviewed the changes the MSP made to its written policies regarding investigations following certification and accreditation. These changes include:



Written obligations for members to provide rights and instructions to victims and witnesses



A requirement that interviews are conducted in accordance with constitutional rights; *e.g.*, the Miranda Rule, the Safe Harbor Rule



Codification of potential routine follow-up investigative steps



Requirements surrounding collection, preservation, and logging of evidence



A requirement that all evidence be logged prior to the end of a member's shift



Designation of interview/interrogation rooms

Policies Related to Detainees

- Increased protocols and detailed procedures regarding the transport and transfer of detainees
- Protocols for transporting, securing, and monitoring of detainees at medical facilities
- Step-by-step instructions for the booking process
- Detailed procedures and requirements regarding search of detainees and custodial inventory of detainee property
- Routine 24-hour monitoring and face-to-face checks on detainees every 30 minutes
- Protocols regarding suicide threats and prevention
- Detailed procedures and guidance regarding medical care, first aid, and medical emergencies
- Detailed procedures regarding the release of detainees



A requirement that members include all investigative steps in all reports and applications for legal process

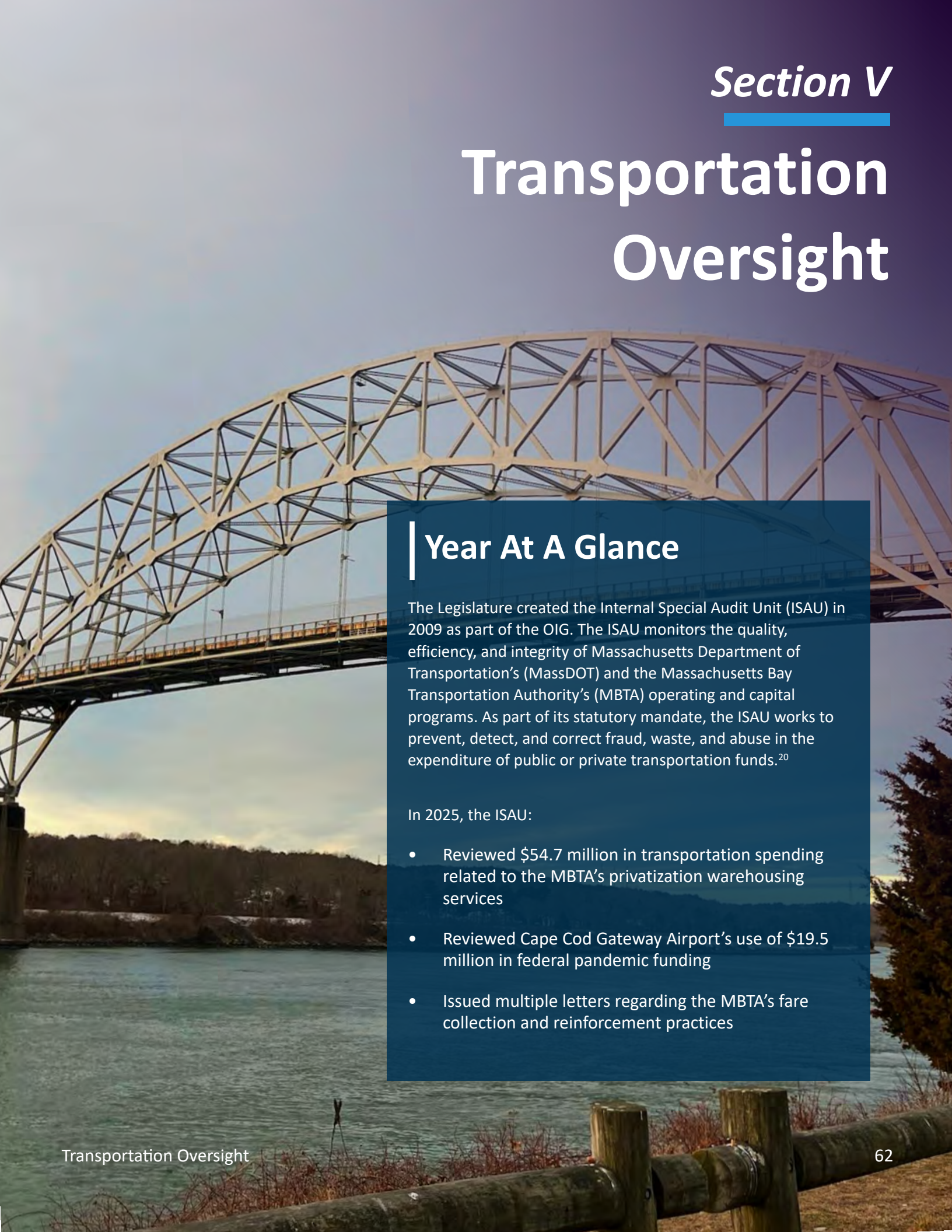


Step-by-step instructions for case management

The DSPO will continue to monitor policy changes initiated as a result of the MSP's efforts to achieve and maintain certification and accreditation.

Section V

Transportation Oversight



Year At A Glance

The Legislature created the Internal Special Audit Unit (ISAU) in 2009 as part of the OIG. The ISAU monitors the quality, efficiency, and integrity of Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) operating and capital programs. As part of its statutory mandate, the ISAU works to prevent, detect, and correct fraud, waste, and abuse in the expenditure of public or private transportation funds.[20]

In 2025, the ISAU:

- Reviewed $54.7 million in transportation spending related to the MBTA's privatization warehousing services
- Reviewed Cape Cod Gateway Airport's use of $19.5 million in federal pandemic funding
- Issued multiple letters regarding the MBTA's fare collection and reinforcement practices

Reviews

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Turnpike Emergency Services

In 2017, the OIG recommended that MassDOT's Highway Division discontinue its practice of reimbursing cities and towns along the Massachusetts Turnpike for providing emergency service response along the turnpike.[21] At the time, the OIG raised concerns about the reimbursements because (1) the arrangement was not required by law and was unique to the turnpike; and (2) MassDOT appeared to be reimbursing cities and towns for responding to incidents that should have been covered by private entities.

In 2025, the ISAU revised the 2017 recommendation based on changed circumstances. Although MassDOT accepted the OIG's recommendations to discontinue the payments after 2020, the ISAU found it had continued to pay the city and town reimbursements. At the start of 2025, MassDOT had yet to enter new written agreements (called master service agreements) with the turnpike communities and was continuing to make reimbursements under the pre-2017 agreements. These continuing reimbursements totaled $865,504 as of April 2025.

The ISAU team makes a site visit to the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Memorial Bridge and the North Station Draw One Bridge in Boston.



MassDOT justified its decision to continue the payments on the basis that the turnpike emergency response services provided by the cities and towns serve a vital operational need and are a cost-effective investment in public safety and mobility.

To address the concerns raised by the OIG, MassDOT confirmed that it would enter new master service agreements and develop policies consistent with prior OIG recommendations to minimize unnecessary payments.

In the new agreements, MassDOT incorporated language that it (1) would only reimburse for services specified in the agreements; and (2) would not cover services that should be borne by private businesses. In the policy space, MassDOT planned to develop and implement internal controls specific to payment processing in order to mitigate the risk of billing errors and duplicate payments.

The ISAU also recommended that MassDOT, and the cities and towns, pursue recovery from third parties for services provided on the turnpike when appropriate.

Industrial Rail Access Program Grants

MassDOT's Rail and Transit Division oversees the competitive Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP), a grant program created by the Legislature in 2012. IRAP is a public/private partnership that provides funding to help eligible applicants invest in industry-based freight rail infrastructure improvement projects.

After researching the grant agreement and requirements, the ISAU asked MassDOT to review an issue raised in a 2021 application. MassDOT reviewed the matter and revised the grant application going forward so that it would better capture necessary information. The FY26 grant application now includes a provision requiring a grantee, prior to receiving authorization to advertise for project-related construction bids, to certify that (1) the project has been fully designed in accordance with industry standards such that construction bid documents are ready for advertisement; (2) all required federal, state, and local environmental permits have been secured for the project; and (3) proper real property rights have been secured.

Additionally, MassDOT updated the application to include language that any misuse of program funds – whether intentional or inadvertent – shall constitute grounds for MassDOT to disallow associated costs, terminate the contract for cause, pursue repayment, and/or establish a multi-year applicant ineligibility for future IRAP funding solicitations.

Highway Service Plazas Lease Procurement

In 2024, MassDOT engaged in a process to procure a new vendor to revitalize, rebuild, and manage highway service plazas across the state. In June 2025, MassDOT selected the vendor for a 35-year term.

In August 2025, the Inspector General sent a letter to the MassDOT Secretary with recommendations on drafting and managing the expected long-term lease agreement for the service plazas.

The Inspector General expressed concerns in the letter that stemmed from prior findings from ISAU reviews of public leases, including leases between MassDOT and private entities, where imprecise, vague, or hard-to-enforce provisions resulted in direct financial losses that constituted a waste of public assets.

MassDOT has a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers to maximize the return on the service plazas. The Inspector General wrote that to meet this responsibility, MassDOT, like other state agencies, must negotiate leases for public property that include well-drafted provisions for fair market rent, clear-cut revenue-sharing provisions, escalation clauses, late fees and penalties, and explicit triggers for payment and reporting obligations for noncompliance. Such terms are particularly important for long-term leases, like the 35-year term for the service plazas.

MassDOT and the vendor ultimately could not reach an agreement on key provisions of the contract and terminated talks. In late 2025, MassDOT extended existing service plaza leases for 18 months while it planned to revise and re-execute the procurement process.

In February 2026, the Inspector General sent a letter to the MassDOT Interim Secretary on the unsuccessful procurement process for the new service plaza vendor.

The Inspector General found that MassDOT had shortcomings in its procurement process for conflict-of-interest disclosures, that vendor affiliates violated the procurement's rules of contact, that MassDOT's use of a live, in-person scoring method increased the risk of perceived bias, and that members of MassDOT's Capital Programs Committee did not feel they had adequate time and information to approve the procurement.

The Inspector General made recommendations on those points for MassDOT to implement in future procurements.

Registry of Motor Vehicles' Unmerged Records Process

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) uses driver-licensing systems operated by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) to

"Ensuring that large-scale public procurements and the resulting contracts are well managed and conducted with transparency and fairness is critical to maintaining the public's confidence in government."

-Inspector General Shapiro



exchange driver-licensing information with other states and to locate and share commercial and non-commercial driver records. One of AAMVA's systems, State-to-State Verification Service (S2S), allows a state to electronically verify whether an individual holds a driver's license or identification card in any other participating state. A recent enhancement of S2S is the Driver History Record (DHR) functionality, which supports the "one driver, one history" concept.

The RMV implemented S2S matching in March 2018 and was the fourth state in the nation to implement DHR functionality in June 2022. As of December 2025, 38 states fully participate in S2S matching with DHR functionality. As new states join, the RMV receives notification of potential duplicate driver records, sometimes referred to as "unmerged records."

Inspector General Shapiro visits MassDOT's Central Massachusetts Transportation Center in Worcester.



Unmerged records can occur through potential matches with other states' records, but also through matches in Massachusetts's own records. Unmerged records arise when an individual has two accounts within the RMV's licensing system. This may occur because of misspelled names, hyphenated names, or other data entry errors, among other reasons.

During 2025, the ISAU reviewed the RMV's process in place for reviewing unmerged records and merging them so that the ATLAS licensing system holds one record per individual.

Over several months, the ISAU met with each RMV division that in some way interacts with unmerged records. The ISAU found that each unit reviews unmerged records in the normal course of attending to their operational needs. When the ISAU met with each of the RMV divisions, only one had a backlog of unmerged records awaiting action at the time of the meeting.

The ISAU verified that RMV divisions have processes to resolve unmerged records and that the processes appear adequate.

The ISAU did not test the RMV's procedures.

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)

Fare Collection and Enforcement Practices

During 2025, the Inspector General sent two letters to the MBTA General Manager highlighting the importance of fare collection on the Commonwealth's major transit systems. The Inspector General's message in both letters emphasized that fares must be collected to demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

The first letter in March 2025 expressed concern that there has been a systemic failure to recognize the importance of fare collection on the commuter rail. Keolis Commuter Services, LLC (Keolis) operates and maintains the MBTA-owned commuter rail system under a multi-year contract. Keolis is responsible for collecting fares from riders, and the MBTA receives a portion of the fares that Keolis collects.

In his letter, the Inspector General shared that the scale of the problem of uncollected fares on the commuter rail and the resulting lost revenue have been greatly understated over the years.

The Inspector General emphasized the need for the MBTA to enforce Keolis's obligations under the contract to collect fares. While recognizing that collecting all fares will not close the MBTA's projected budget gap, the Inspector General reiterated that the MBTA and Keolis, as its vendor, are obligated to take the steps necessary to collect fares.

The second letter in September 2025 addressed the need for the MBTA to enforce fare collection at transit stations, with a focus on the Green Line.

In 2025, the MBTA implemented two long-overdue milestones: (1) hiring fare engagement representatives to verify riders' fares and issue formal warnings and citations across the subway system; and (2) constructing new fare gates at South Station, the system's largest commuter rail hub.

In this letter, the Inspector General acknowledged these achievements while stressing that fare collection is part of the MBTA's fiduciary obligation to its funders and the public whom it serves. Drawing on the ISAU's field work, the Inspector General recommended that the MBTA focus fare engagement efforts on Green Line street-level stations.

Privatization of Service Review

The record-breaking snowfall during the winter of 2015 crippled public transportation in Massachusetts and contributed to the MBTA's operational challenges at that time. In response, the MBTA proposed privatizing a number of its services to address its operations, as well as its budget issues. Under 1993 legislation known as the Taxpayer Protection Act, a state agency must usually engage in a lengthy process to demonstrate the value and benefit of privatizing services.[22] Under the circumstances existing in 2015, the Legislature granted the MBTA a waiver from the Taxpayer Protection Act for three years, allowing it to privatize services under less onerous procurement procedures. At the same time, the Legislature required the OIG to review the privatization contracts at the conclusion of those contracts. Under that 2015 mandate, the OIG assesses the privatization contract in four areas: (1) the procurement process; (2) the quality of the services provided; (3) the expected and actual costs of the contract; and (4) the actual cost of the contract compared to the benefits derived from it.[23]

The MBTA used the three-year waiver to privatize seven services. The ISAU has reviewed four of the completed privatization contracts.[24]

During 2025, the ISAU initiated a review of the MBTA's contract for warehousing and logistics services with Mancon, LLC. This is the ISAU's fifth privatization of services review.

Services under that contract concluded on January 31, 2026. As of January 15, 2026, the MBTA had paid out $54,713,205.93 under the contract, with a final payment outstanding. The ISAU will release its report evaluating the warehousing and logistics services contract in 2026.

MBTA Process Improvements in Procurements

As part of its mission to evaluate the operations and procedures of MassDOT and the MBTA, the ISAU monitors how the agencies implement recommendations developed in prior reports and letters. In 2025, the MBTA continued to make process improvements in procurements, covering many of the issues that the ISAU had raised in its privatization reviews.

The MBTA undertook several training initiatives in 2025.

The MBTA continued to require employees who serve as administrators for contracts valued at over $250,000 to attend the OIG's course, *Contract Administration for Public Employees*. According to the MBTA, 67 staff members completed this training in 2023 and 2024. An additional 68 staff members completed the training in 2025 (through November).

The MBTA developed *Purchasing Requester and Receiver* training, which focuses on basic financial controls and requirements, and the obligations associated with procurement transactions. The MBTA requires employees to attend if they enter either purchase requisitions or purchase receipts, and the training is recommended for their managers. The MBTA reports that over 300 employees have completed this training.

During the past calendar year, MBTA Procurement and Logistics updated procedures for MBTA buyers and sourcing staff, including standard operating procedures and reference documents. The MBTA has also been updating its Procurement Manual to align with Federal Transit Administration recommendations.

In addition to those policy and procedure updates, the MBTA shared with the ISAU that it has strengthened its efforts to monitor contract life cycles. The MBTA now runs regular interval reporting (*i.e.*, 30, 60, 90 days) to better track contract completion dates. This information allows the MBTA to better plan for future procurements. The MBTA has also reported that it expanded the scope and content of weekly compliance meetings to strengthen overall contract administration.



Affirmative Claims Process

When a business or person causes damage to MBTA property, the MBTA generally has the right to seek payment for the costs of repairs and replacements. In 2025, the ISAU reviewed the MBTA's practices for identifying and pursuing these claims for damages to MBTA property, sometimes known as affirmative claims.

In proceeding with its review, the ISAU spoke to MBTA staff and requested policy and procedure documents.

The ISAU found that the MBTA lacks a comprehensive process for identifying and pursuing affirmative claims and therefore risks failing to recover monies owed by those causing damages.

The ISAU recommended that the MBTA develop organization-wide policies and procedures to identify and report losses or damages caused by third parties to appropriate MBTA personnel for evaluation and potential pursuit of recovery.

The MBTA should also detail the claim review and screening process and the criteria for assessing claims. The ISAU recommended that the MBTA educate its employees on the reporting mechanisms and claims processes once they are developed.

Use of Commercial License Plates

The MBTA owns a fleet of vehicles that it assigns to employees for work duties. The size and type of fleet vehicles range from sedans to pickup trucks. In addition to the MBTA-owned fleet, MBTA employees are assigned vehicles that are owned by, and registered to, the MBTA's commuter rail operator, Keolis.

The ISAU reviewed MBTA policies and procedures for marking non-revenue vehicles outfitted with commercial license plates, not including vehicles used for law enforcement.

In general, the Massachusetts General Laws state that vehicles owned by the Commonwealth "shall be plainly and conspicuously marked."[25] Further, the Commonwealth Operational Services Division's Office of Vehicle Maintenance (OVM), which sets policies for the use of Commonwealth vehicles by executive agencies, requires that all state vehicles "shall be issued official state registration and plates" and that they "be affixed with [d]ecals and other markings as required by State law."

During its review, the ISAU found that multiple MBTA non-revenue vehicles had neither markings nor official state registration plates. The ISAU also found that the MBTA's current fleet policies do not cover (1) the use of commercial, rather than MBTA, license plates; or (2) non-fleet vehicles purchased and maintained by a third party for MBTA use.

By using commercial license plates on vehicles without including either state markings or logos, the MBTA makes those vehicles indistinguishable from privately owned vehicles. The lack of markings creates multiple risks, ranging from the threat of vehicle misuse to decreased accountability and potential appearances of a conflict of interest.

The MBTA's fleet policy should be in line with both the Massachusetts General Laws and OVM's vehicle marking requirements for executive branch departments.

The ISAU recommended that the MBTA mark MBTA-operated vehicles, whether registered to the MBTA or a third-party vendor, consistent with the OVM policy.

By appropriately marking its fleet vehicles, the MBTA will increase accountability.



The Cape Cod Gateway Airport used $19.5 million in COVID-19 grant funding for operational and maintenance expenses and airport development projects.

Other Transportation Areas

Cape Cod Gateway Airport

The Cape Cod Gateway Airport received $19.5 million in COVID-19 grant funding programs under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program-Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA), and the Airport Rescue Grant-American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The grants went toward operational and maintenance expenses and airport development projects.

In February 2025, the ISAU issued a letter to the airport summarizing the ISAU's review of the airport's use of this COVID-19 grant funding. The ISAU reviewed relevant funding guidance from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and conducted multiple meetings with the FAA, MassDOT's Aeronautics Division, and Cape Cod Gateway Airport. The ISAU also reviewed grant documents and reimbursement requests that the airport provided, as well as grant documents and expenditure data provided by MassDOT's Aeronautics Division.

The ISAU found that the airport's operation and maintenance expense requests for grant funding were reasonable and in compliance with FAA expense guidelines.

Additionally, the ISAU found that Cape Cod Gateway Airport's costs were incurred during the permissible period of grant performance. The ISAU also determined that the airport's development project requests for grant funding were reasonable and in compliance with FAA expense guidelines.

Monitoring and Oversight Activities

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

As part of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program,[26] MassDOT is receiving $63 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law over a five-year period to build electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the Commonwealth. MassDOT submitted its initial NEVI Plan to FHWA in July 2022. FHWA approved it for implementation on September 14, 2022.

In 2025, the ISAU met with MassDOT's Highway Division for status updates to MassDOT's NEVI Plan, including efforts to date and long-term strategy.

Throughout that time, MassDOT was working with vendors to develop sites across the Commonwealth with EV chargers funded by the NEVI program. In addition to meeting with MassDOT, the ISAU regularly attended the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinating Council's monthly meetings to remain informed of Commonwealth-wide EV infrastructure policies and implementation. The ISAU will continue to monitor MassDOT's progress, as well as the Commonwealth's EV charger inventory and all funding received by MassDOT and the MBTA for EV charging.

Heavy Rail Vehicle Procurement

The ISAU continued monitoring the MBTA's 2014 contract with China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation Massachusetts (CRRC MA)[27] for the complete replacement of the MBTA's heavy rail vehicle fleet of Orange and Red Line cars. The original contract, including amendments and exercised options for additional Red Line cars, was expected to take 9 years at a cost of $870.5 million. Even before the global disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently by federal tariffs and foreign import concerns, CRRC MA had fallen behind on the contract. The MBTA renegotiated the contract with CRRC MA in 2024, setting a new final delivery date of December 2027 at a new cost of $1.018 billion.

Throughout 2025, the ISAU met with the MBTA to discuss CRRC MA's performance under the contract, delivery deadlines, and fulfillment of contractual obligations.

The ISAU will continue to monitor the MBTA's management of this contract and CRRC MA's performance.

The ISAU team looks at CRRC MA and older model Red Line cars in the MBTA's Cabot Yard.



Fraud Prevention Training

For the seventh consecutive year, the ISAU staff provided fraud prevention training for the MassDOT Highway Division's Construction Management Certification Program. In the March 2025 training, the ISAU highlighted common fraud schemes, prevention techniques, and red flags for vendor fraud. The ISAU also included a case study on bridge maintenance contracts, with a focus on evaluating contract terms, vendor submittals, and invoices.

The ISAU also provided two fraud awareness and prevention trainings in 2025 for MBTA employees. The ISAU tailored the training to MBTA operations, covering best practices in contract administration and vendor oversight using transit-specific case studies.

Following these trainings, the MBTA created its own internal self-paced course based on the ISAU's course content. The MBTA recognized the benefit of creating an online training option to reach more of its 24-7 operations staff. The training was developed by the MBTA's Workforce Development team, with assistance from the ISAU. The MBTA rolled out the training in December 2025.

MassDOT Fraud Hotline

Confidential fraud hotlines, like the ISAU's hotline for MassDOT/MBTA employees and the public, do not just provide a safe, anonymous way for individuals to report concerns. Such hotlines also reflect a "tone from the top" that the organization values a culture of ethical behavior and compliance with applicable laws and policies.

For a hotline to be an effective tool, the organization must evaluate each complaint and report results within the bounds of confidentiality. The ISAU takes pride in how it receives, triages, and manages complaints in a confidential process. A person who makes a complaint has the option of remaining anonymous or may choose to provide their identity so that the ISAU may follow up.

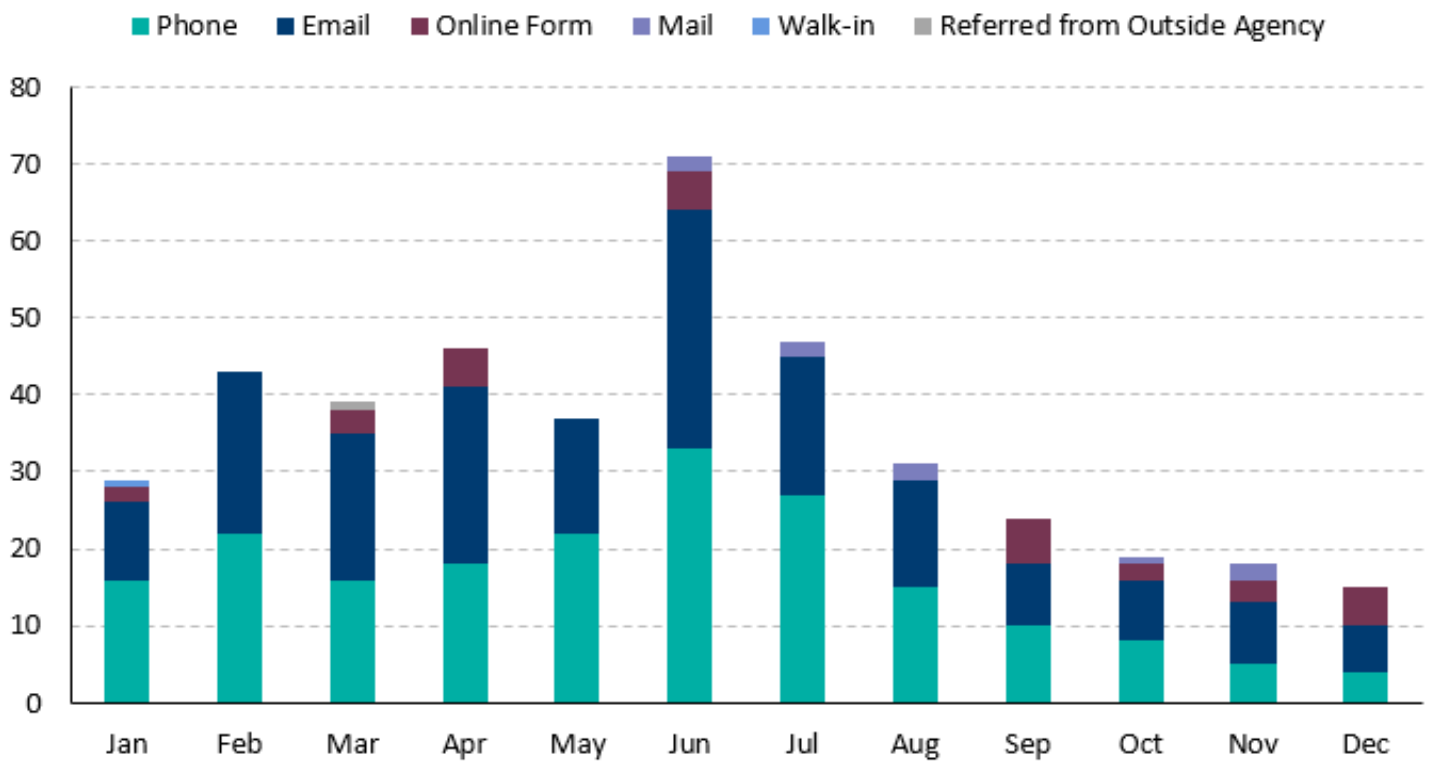
The ISAU evaluates each complaint it receives. If the matter is outside the jurisdiction of the ISAU or the OIG, the complainant is redirected to another agency or, when the complainant is anonymous, the ISAU may send the complaint directly to another agency. For matters within the OIG's jurisdiction, the ISAU or OIG may open a limited or full investigation. In some instances, the complaint may not be substantiated, but may result in the ISAU making recommendations for improved policies or procedures or even changes to statutes and regulations.

Each complaint gives the ISAU valuable insight on how government agencies can operate better to prevent, mitigate, detect, and correct fraud, waste, and abuse. The ISAU uses lessons learned from reviews and investigations resulting from hotline complaints in trainings and advisories on best practices for contract management, internal controls, and fraud prevention

The ISAU's hotline provides multiple ways for employees and the public to communicate concerns: by telephone at (855) 963-2580, email at MassDOTFraudHotline@mass.gov, or by online form on the OIG's website. The ISAU's investigatory letters and reports are public upon issuance.

The ISAU received 418 hotline complaints in 2025. The graph below shows how complainants brought their concerns to the ISAU throughout the year.

MassDOT Hotline Intake Source by Month (2025)



Disability Placard Abuse Hotline

The ISAU created the placard abuse hotline to handle complaints after issuing its report, *The Abuse of Disability Parking Placards in Massachusetts, February 2016*. Between 2016 and 2025, the ISAU received 762 placard complaints. In October 2025, the ISAU discontinued its disability placard abuse hotline and began redirecting those complaints to the RMV's Medical Affairs Bureau, which receives and investigates the same type of complaints about disability placard abuse.[28] Redirecting these complaints to the RMV serves the interest of streamlined reporting.

Section VI

Public Project Oversight

Year At A Glance

- Reviewed and issued approvals for public entities to use the public construction management at-risk delivery method in projects with estimated costs of over $2.6 billion

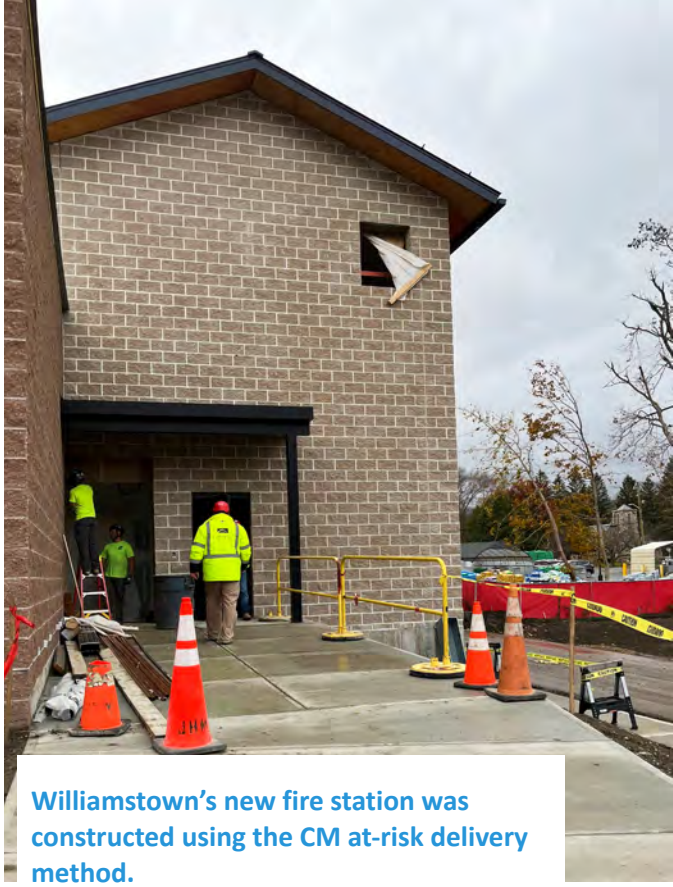


IG Shapiro attends an Asset Management Board site visit to the Hurley-Lindemann building in Government Center.

Public Construction

Under the authority of Chapter 149A of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) must approve the use of the construction management (CM) at-risk delivery method for public projects. Under the CM at-risk model, the awarding authority for a construction project hires a construction manager and agrees on a maximum price for the project, with most costs exceeding that price shouldered by the construction manager.[29]

The OIG reviewed and approved 19 CM at-risk applications in 2025.[30] These projects are described in the table below.



Williamstown's new fire station was constructed using the CM at-risk delivery method.

CM At-Risk Projects Received and Approved in 2025

Applicant	Project Description	Project Type	Location
Abbey Kelley Foster Public Charter School	Abbey Kelley Foster Public Charter School	School	Worcester
Boston Housing Authority	Franklin Field Family Development	Affordable Housing	Boston
Town of Burlington	Burlington High School	School	Burlington
City of Cambridge	First Street Parking Garage	Parking Garage	Cambridge
City of Cambridge	Kennedy-Longfellow School	School	Cambridge
Cotuit Fire District	Cotuit Fire Station	Fire Station	Cotuit
Town of East Bridgewater	East Bridgewater Central Elementary School	School	East Bridgewater
Town of Littleton	Littleton Shaker Elementary School	School	Littleton
Town of Longmeadow	Longmeadow Middle School	School	Longmeadow

Applicant	Project Description	Project Type	Location
Martha's Vineyard Regional School District	Martha's Vineyard High School	School	Vineyard Haven
Town of Medway	Medway Municipal Complex	Public Safety Facility and Municipal Building	Medway
City of Melrose	Melrose Police Headquarters	Public Safety Facility	Melrose
Town of Millis	Millis Middle/High School	School	Millis
Town of Needham	Needham Pollard Middle School	School	Needham
City of Salem	Salem High School	School	Salem
Town of Southborough[31]	Southborough Neary Elementary School	School	Southborough
Springfield Redevelopment Authority	Springfield Cross Street Parking Garage	Parking Garage	Springfield
Town of Stoughton	Stoughton South Elementary School	School	Stoughton
City of Worcester	Worcester South Division Fire Station	Fire Station	Worcester

These 19 projects represented over $2.6 billion in estimated costs.

The OIG requires awarding authorities to submit project milestone information to the OIG. This information keeps the OIG apprised of a project through completion and will assist the OIG in its evaluation of the CM at-risk delivery method.

Real Property

The OIG reviews a variety of real property transactions involving public property, including dispositions, acquisitions, and long-term leases to ensure the public's interests are protected. The Legislature periodically requires the OIG to review and approve of appraisal methodologies as a condition of special legislation for the sale or lease of public land.

As described in the table below, in 2025 the OIG reviewed and approved two appraisals related to the disposition or lease of public properties. The OIG also reviewed a long-term lease and a land disposition agreement.

Appraisals Reviewed and Approved in 2025

Recipient	Disposition Type	Size of Parcel	Location
Town of Danvers	Conveyance for municipal use	5.68 acres of land	Danvers
Private Party (Kennedy's Irish Pub, Inc.)	Conveyance for beautification and parking purposes	1.2 acres of land	Marlborough
Nonprofit Organization (The Esplanade Association)	Lease for construction and operation of a visitor center and pavilion	1.9 acres of land	Boston
Private Party (Olmsted Village Master Developer LLC)	Coneyance for housing and community benefits	10 acres of land	Boston

Asset Management Board

One of the statutorily mandated responsibilities of the Inspector General is to serve as a member of the Asset Management Board (AMB), a five-member board tasked with reviewing and approving the procurement or disposition of real property on behalf of the Commonwealth via alternative methods. The Legislature has authorized the AMB to waive certain statutory requirements to allow for such procurements or dispositions. The AMB also reviews and votes on the Commonwealth's use of long-term leases.

The AMB is comprised of the Inspector General and the commissioner of DCAMM (who serve as *ex officio* members), along with three additional members of the public who are appointed by the governor.

In January 2025, the AMB voted on project proposals for the construction of new courthouses in Springfield and South Boston. The AMB carefully scrutinized both proposals. Inspector General Shapiro ultimately voted against the Springfield project at the January 2025 meeting, citing his concern that a community leader's public statements about a developer and location may have jeopardized a competitive procurement. The project advanced on a 3-to-1 vote.

In June 2025, the AMB voted to approve a major project proposal to redevelop the Hurley-Lindemann complex, located in Boston's West End. The complex is the current site of a large Department of Mental Health facility housing over 100 long-term patients. As part of the voting process, Inspector General Shapiro advocated for language in the proposal that would prioritize the needs of DMH and its onsite patient population. This language was ultimately adopted by the board.

Section VII

Statutory Directives



Year At A Glance

- Initiated three stautorily mandated reviews on the Commonwealth's special education transportation services, the practices of Massachusetts bar advocates in representing indigent clients, and the budgets and expenditures of the Commonwealth's 14 sheriffs' offices

Mandated Reviews

In 2025, the Legislature passed, and the Governor signed into law, three bills tasking the OIG to review several topics of public policy and public funding administration. The OIG has completed one of these reviews and will report its findings and recommendations on the remaining reviews in 2026.

Special Education School Transportation Services



In June 2025, the Legislature directed the OIG to review special education school district transportation services and make recommendations on how school districts can reduce costs, maximize purchasing power, and act transparently and efficiently in providing these services.[32] The Legislature further directed the OIG to review possible ways for districts to consolidate transportation services regionally.

The OIG issued its findings and recommendations in a February 23, 2026 publication entitled *Special Education Transportation Study: Strategies to Mitigate Rising Costs*.



Bar Advocate Representation of Indigent Clients

In August 2025, in response to the bar advocate work stoppage, the Legislature mandated that the OIG examine defense practices for indigent clients in trial courts, including matters related to determination of indigency, billing practices by bar advocates, caseloads of counsel who represent indigent defendants, the fiscal impact of increasing the proportion of indigent clients represented by public defenders, and best practices of other jurisdictions in providing representation.[33]

The OIG will issue its findings and recommendations in June 2026.

Sheriffs' Budgets and Expenditures

In November 2025, the Legislature charged the OIG with investigating the expenditures of the Commonwealth's 14 sheriffs' offices during Fiscal Year 2025 and with making recommendations to ensure that sheriffs comply with state finance law.[34]

The OIG issued its preliminary findings and recommendations in a February 27, 2026 report, *A Preliminary Review of Sheriffs' Budgets and Expenditures*, and will issue a final report on the topic in June 2026.

Image credit: Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association



Section VIII

Legislative Recommendations

Year At A Glance

- Built on momentum in the Legislature to better define the roles of the Cannabis Control Commission's board chair and executive director, resulting in both chambers passing legislation to address issues highlighted by the OIG
- Filed bills for consideration during the 2025-2026 legislative session relating to issues such as procurement and retail electricity suppliers, most of which received initial approval from their respective committees

Cannabis Control Commission

The OIG's work in calling public attention to structural problems impacting the Cannabis Control Commission's (CCC) functions, in addition to other developments at the CCC, spurred the Legislature to prioritize action to reform the agency's enabling statute in its 2025-2026 legislative session.

In 2024, Inspector General Shapiro wrote to Senate President Karen Spilka and House Speaker Ron Mariano calling on legislative leadership to appoint a receiver to manage the CCC's day-to-day functions. The Inspector General urged legislators to amend the CCC's enabling statute, Section 76 of Chapter 10 of the Massachusetts General Laws, to put the agency in a better position to effectively regulate the Commonwealth's cannabis industry.

The Inspector General based that recommendation on his conclusion that the CCC's enabling statute is unclear, contradictory, and provides little guidance on the authority and respective responsibilities of the CCC's chair, commissioners, and executive director.

Inspector General Shapiro later reiterated his call for reform when he testified before the Joint Committee on Cannabis Policy. Following his testimony, the Joint Committee announced that it would revisit the CCC's enabling statute.

The committee held two public hearings in fall 2024, taking additional testimony from industry stakeholders, researchers, and policymakers.

In June 2025, in one of its first major standalone bills for the 2025-2026 session, the House passed legislation delineating the responsibilities and powers of the CCC's executive director, reforming the appointed commissioners, and clarifying the role of the commission. In November 2025, the Senate passed similar legislation to reform the CCC's enabling statute. In April 2026, the Legislature passed the conference committee bill, and the governor signed the measure into law.

OIG Recommendations

In March 2025, the OIG issued a letter following a review of the CCC's failure to collect prorated and provisional license fees. The OIG found that CCC staff granted license extensions without approval. After a commission vote allowed the director of licensing to extend licenses, the director failed to enforce payment of prorated license fees. As a result, the CCC failed to collect approximately $550,000 in licensee fees between August 2022 and August 2024. The OIG also found that the CCC did not collect as much as $1.2 million in provisional license fees. Some of that amount ultimately may not have been collectible since some applicants may have lost interest in operating cannabis businesses during the length of time it took the CCC to process their applications. Further, the CCC's licensing platform, MassCIP, did not have adequate controls to collect prorated license fees or to track license extensions. As a result of its review, the OIG recommended that the CCC improve MassCIP's system controls, conduct a comprehensive audit of all IT systems, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the CCC chair, commissioners, executive director, and division directors to prevent similar oversight failures in the future.

Legislative Bill Reviews

The OIG's Government Outreach and Public Policy Division is regularly asked to review proposed legislation and provides input to bill sponsors or committee members on issues relevant to the OIG's oversight responsibilities.

In October 2025, Inspector General Shapiro testified before the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government on those portions of House 56, *An Act Empowering Municipalities and Local Governments*, that address procurement law codified in Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws. The bill includes language recommended by the Inspector General that raises the maximum municipal pricing threshold for written quotes (rather than sealed bids or proposals) to $100,000, to be consistent with the threshold for school districts. It also includes language to exempt snow hauling from municipal procurement requirements. As snow plowing is already exempt, this new exemption will allow municipalities to procure snow plowing and snow hauling services together.

In a separate letter to the Joint Committee on Public Service, the Inspector General cautioned against language in House 56 which would expand exceptions to post-retirement employment options for municipalities. Inspector General Shapiro recommended that the Legislature revive the Post-Retirement Earnings Task Force established under Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024 to examine factors impeding the Commonwealth's effective administration of the post-retirement earnings rules for public employees.



In 2025, Inspector General Shapiro testified before various legislative committees on issues such as procurement thresholds, snow hauling procurement exemptions, and post-retirement employment exemptions.

Proposed Legislation

In November 2024, the OIG filed several bills for consideration during the 2025-2026 legislative session.

House 12, *An Act Updating Chapter 30B*, would equalize the price thresholds in the Uniform Procurement Act. Currently, based on a recent change in the law, school districts are permitted to seek three written quotations for procurements under $100,000. House 12 would allow the same threshold and practice to occur for municipal government. The bill would also increase the "sound business practices" threshold to $15,000 and allow the use of a request for proposals for procurements of $100,000 or less. The Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight reported the bill out favorably, and House 12 is currently before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

House 13, *An Act Relative to Snow Hauling and Removal*, would add snow hauling and snow removal services to Chapter 30B's current exemption for snow plowing. The Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight reported the bill out favorably, and House 13 is currently before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

House 15, *An Act Relative to Retail Electricity Suppliers*, would strengthen the enforcement mechanisms and bolster surety requirements for retail electricity suppliers (RES). The OIG reviewed RES programs and found that enforcement gaps in the programs prevented the Commonwealth from recouping millions of dollars that suppliers owed to the state. The Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy has issued a study order for House 15.

House 16, *An Act Relative to County Land Disposition*, would clarify the process that county governments must take when disposing of real property. House 16 would require county governments to offer, in writing, surplus property to the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, which would then inquire whether other state agencies have use for the property. House 16 was redrafted and reported out as House 4392 by the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government. As of the date of this report, the bill is before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

The OIG also filed **House 17, *An Act Creating the Office of the Inspector General Recovery Fund***. The provisions of House 17 were included as part of a broader supplemental budget bill and were signed into law as Chapter 14 of the Acts of 2025. Through its passage, Chapter 14 created a non-budgeted special revenue fund under Chapter 29 of the Massachusetts General Laws to replace the OIG's expendable trust fund. The OIG's expendable trust was created in 2014 and could only be used for temporary purposes. The permanent fund established by Chapter 14 receives monies from civil recoveries or investigatory costs in the same manner as the former expendable trust. The OIG has the discretion to spend these funds for operational, administrative, and investigatory purposes.

Inspector General Shapiro's Testimony Regarding House 12, *An Act Updating Chapter 30B*, and House 13, *An Act Relative to Snow Hauling and Removal*

"Procurement law really does matter to the hardworking municipal employees who are trying to conduct effective procurements every day in our cities and towns. I know this because I've traveled across our Commonwealth to speak directly with and listen to them, lots of them . . . So I really do believe I understand the impact that the changes offered in these bills will have to our municipal leaders in all parts of the Commonwealth."



Section IX

Education and Outreach

Year At A Glance

- 2,048 students registered for 135 OIG Academy classes
- 554 individuals earned or renewed their Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation
- 79 Massachusetts municipalities participated in the OIG Academy's "One Free Designee" Program, bringing the total municipal participation since program launch to 216
- 102 Massachusetts school districts participated in the OIG Academy's "One Free Designee – Schools" Program

OIG Academy instructors prepare for classes in the Academy's classroom at 1 Ashburton Place in Boston.

The OIG Academy

The Learning and Development (L&D) Division, the OIG's educational and technical assistance arm, works to further Inspector General Shapiro's belief that education is a primary vehicle for the prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse of public resources. In 2025, the division continued to educate state and local government employees, procurement professionals, and private individuals on good governance, public purchasing laws, contract administration, and fraud prevention.

Through its training programs, the L&D Division's OIG Academy equips participants with the tools they need to safeguard public resources. In 2025, the Academy offered 135 class sessions in introductory and advanced topics related to procurement, fraud awareness and prevention, and governance. Several courses were new to the Academy's catalog: *Understanding Leadership*, *Using Data Analytics for Oversight and Beyond*, and *Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure: Purchasing Strategies Under 30B and Statewide Contracts*. The Academy served a total of 2,048 registrants throughout the year in its in-person, virtual instructor, asynchronous self-paced, and hybrid class formats.

In addition to teaching classes, the L&D Division accommodated speaking requests from governmental jurisdictions. In 2025, the division made both virtual and in-person presentations on topics such as fraud prevention, procurement practices, and effective governance.

The MCPPO Designation

A core function of the OIG Academy is to educate public servants and the public at large on laws and best practices surrounding public procurements. The Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation signifies that the holder achieved a comprehensive understanding of Massachusetts public purchasing laws, practices, and principles. In 2025, 554 individuals earned or renewed their MCPPO Designation.

To earn an MCPPO Designation, a student must complete three classes: (1) *Public Contracting Overview*, an introduction to Massachusetts procurement laws, including a comprehensive overview of Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws (the Uniform Procurement Act); (2) *Supplies and Services Contracting*, which delves more

2025 by the Numbers

135
class sessions

2,048
registrants

554
MCPPO Designations earned or renewed

279
School Project Designer and OPM Certifications earned or renewed

216
participants in OFD Program for municipalities since its inception

102
school district participants in OFD – Schools Program

deeply into Chapter 30B and covers topics such as writing bid specifications, evaluating proposals, and administering contracts; and (3) *Design and Construction Contracting*, which covers Massachusetts public design and construction laws and explores topics such as construction bidding and sub-bidding, legal issues in construction contracting, and prevailing wage laws. Candidates for the credential must pass competency assessments related to procurement best practices. To stay current, holders of an MCPPO Designation must earn continuing education credits annually and renew their Designation every three years.

The School Project Designer and Owner's Project Management (OPM) Certification

The Academy also partners with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to provide a certification for designers and owner's project managers who are planning to work on MSBA-funded school building projects. To earn this certification, a student must complete the School Project Designer and OPM Certification course, which provides a comprehensive understanding of Massachusetts public design and construction laws and the administrative processes for MSBA funding. Students who complete the course and pass the exam are certified to administer MSBA-funded projects. Holders of this certification must renew their designation every three years by taking the School Project and OPM recertification course and passing the competency assessment exam. In 2025, 279 individuals earned or renewed their School Project Designer and OPM Certification.

Continuing Education Credits

OIG Academy courses equip participants with the knowledge and skills they need to safeguard public resources. They also support students in maintaining a variety of licenses and certifications through continuing education and professional development credits. The Academy maintains accreditations that allow its courses to be counted as continuing education for the American Institute of Architects, the Massachusetts Fire Service Commission, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Commitment to Excellence in Adult Learning

In 2025, the OIG Academy successfully reintroduced in-person learning in the OIG's classroom at 1 Ashburton Place in Boston. Academy instructors taught 48 students in two in-person *Public Contracting Overview* classes, which the instructional team revamped to enhance the student learning experience. Instructors led this two-day course both in-person and virtually.

The instructional team also created a two-day virtual instructor-led rendering of the *Supplies and Services Contracting* course in 2025, which since the COVID pandemic had been offered only in an asynchronous self-paced format. Adding the virtual instructor-led option gives students the ability to choose the delivery method that works best for their schedules and learning styles.

To better meet the needs of designers and owner's project managers, the OIG Academy team also restructured the School Project Designer and OPM Certification course in 2025. By reducing the in-person component of the class from four to two days and supplementing that live instructional time with two days of online material, the Academy seeks to give designers and owner's project managers more flexibility to complete the course requirements and achieve their certification.

The OIG Academy is always evaluating how to improve its course offerings and better meet the needs of students.

What are students saying about OIG Academy classes?

"Before taking the courses, I knew the basics of procurement, but the program gave me a much deeper understanding of the legal framework, ethics, and accountability that guide every purchasing decision. The instructors did a great job breaking down Chapter 30B and public construction laws in a way that made sense for someone working in the field every day. I've already applied what I learned to improve how we write specs, evaluate quotes, and document purchases. The focus on fairness and transparency really resonated with me; I take pride in knowing we're using taxpayer funds responsibly. Thank you for offering such a practical and well-designed program. It's made a real difference in how I approach my work and serve our community."

Eion Bohnert, Superintendent, EMT-P
Motor Squad Division
Foxborough Fire and Rescue

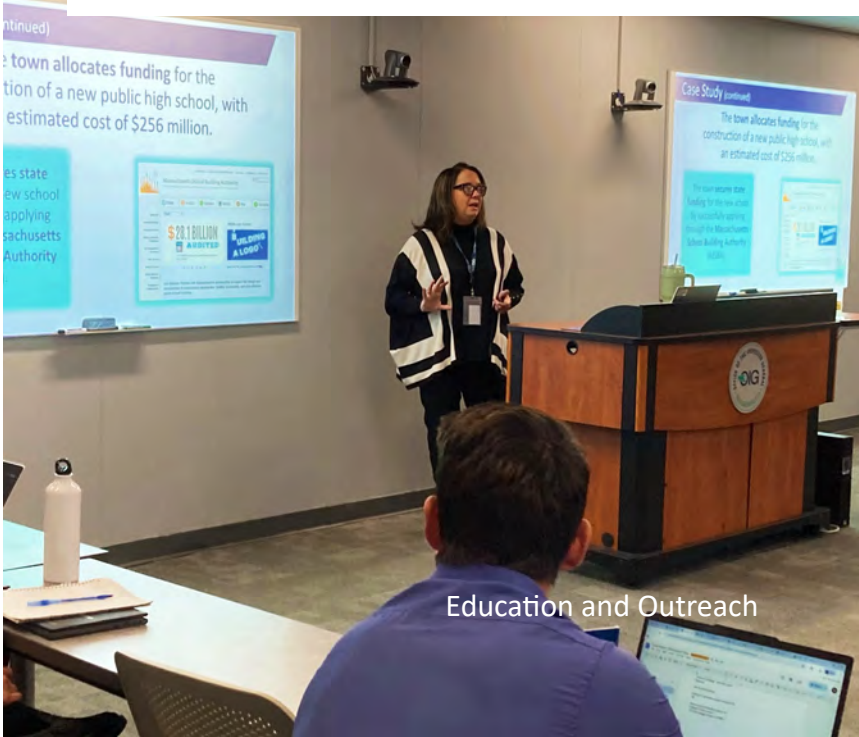
"I am the CPO for my jurisdiction. I have been MCPPO certified for six plus years and have taken the OIG courses several times, as well as many electives. I always find classes to be well-structured, informative, and enjoy the engagement with fellow procurement professionals. I highly recommend the OIG procurement courses to any public procurement employees as well as private contractors and designers looking to better understand municipal procurement and publicly funded project requirements."

Molly Gilfeather Rodriquez
Director of Purchasing
City of New Bedford

"Participating in the MCPPO certification program had been a very rewarding professional development experience. From the very beginning, the course content stood out as incredibly tailored and relevant to my day-to-day project responsibilities as the Academic Principal at Fitzemeyer & Tocci Associates, Inc. The modules were well-structured, clearly presented, and designed in a way that made the information highly accessible, even when tackling scenarios I had little experience with. The flexibility of the remote format also allowed me to engage with my content on my own schedule while still gaining a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter."

Abdullah Khaliqi, PE, MCPPO, CPQ
Principal Academic
Fitzemeyer & Tocci Associates, Inc.

OIG Academy instructor Marybeth Fleming teaches an in-person class at 1 Ashburton Place.



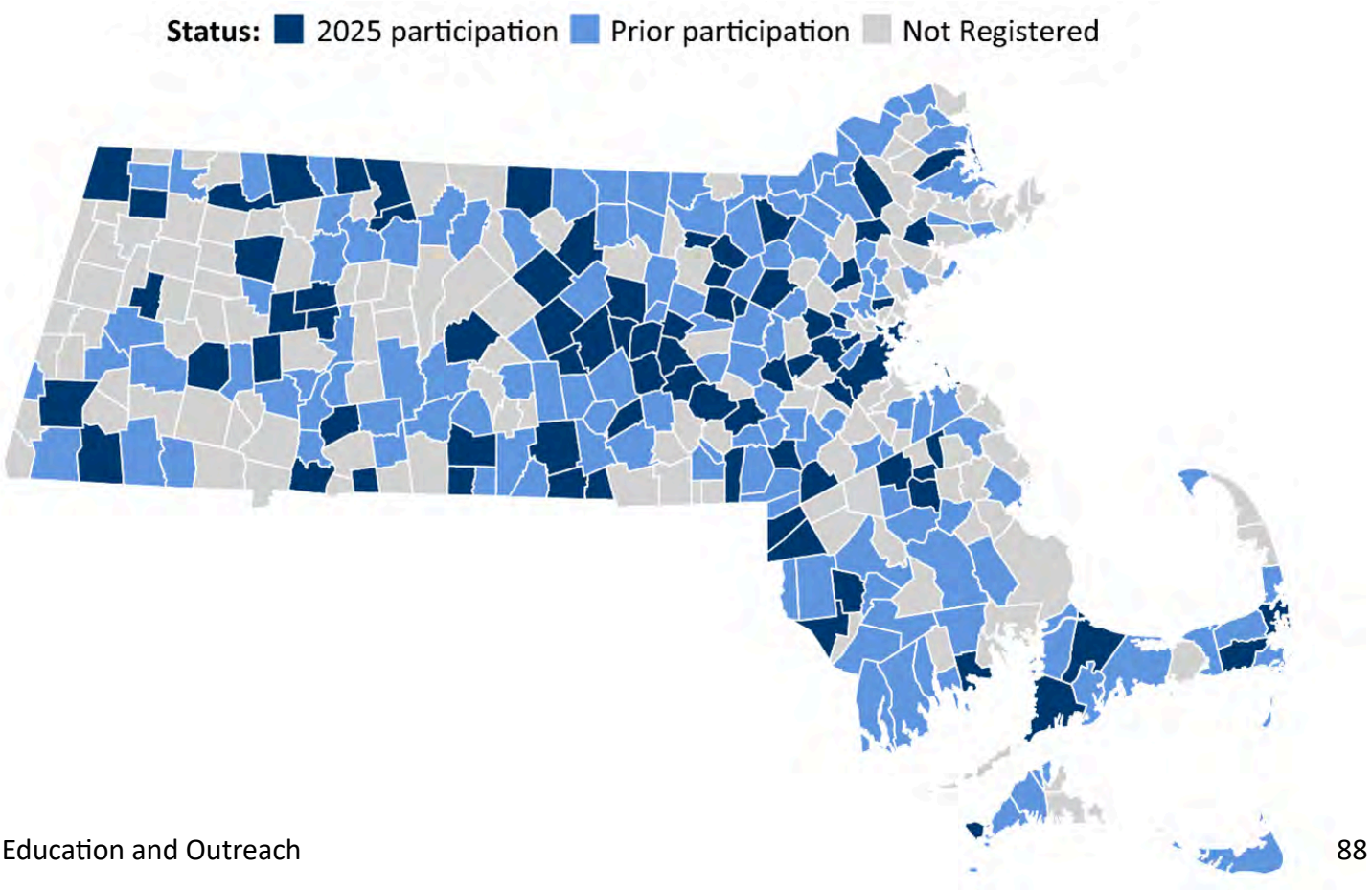
The OIG is committed to meeting the learning needs of adult students. In October 2025, the OIG hired Dr. Robin Frkal to serve as the Director of the L&D Division. She looks forward to bringing her previous experience in higher education administration to the OIG Academy to develop specific learning pathways in support of the OIG's distinct learner groups. Also in October 2025, Academy instructor Marybeth Fleming was promoted to serve as the Curriculum and Instructional Administrator. Marybeth brings over 20 years of education experience to this role, which is focused on implementing adult learning principles to deliver high-quality instruction.

'One Free Designee' Program

Inspector General Shapiro created the "One Free Designee" (OFD) Program in 2023 to respond to the challenge some communities were experiencing in covering the costs associated with the MCPPO Designation. Under the inaugural OFD Program, every city and town in the Commonwealth was eligible to select one employee to take the classes required for an MCPPO Designation, with the $1,885 cost of the program absorbed by the OIG. By the end of June 2025, 216 Massachusetts municipalities had successfully participated. Among those were 36 municipalities that had never had an MCPPO designee in their jurisdiction and nine municipalities that used the program to renew lapsed Designations.

On July 1, 2025, Inspector General Shapiro shifted the focus of the OFD Program to the Commonwealth's schools. Under the "One Free Designee – Schools" Program, any public school district, regional public school district, education collaborative, or Horace Mann and Commonwealth charter school has the opportunity to equip one employee with an MCPPO Designation. Like the inaugural OFD Program for municipalities, the OFD – Schools Program allows public school districts to enroll an employee in the three courses required for the MCPPO Designation, with the costs absorbed by the OIG. To take

OFD Participants in 2025 and Prior Years



advantage of the OFD – Schools Program, an applicant must be authorized by their superintendent of schools, education collaborative executive director, or charter school leader. Participants must enroll and complete all required coursework by June 30, 2026.

As represented in the map below, 102 out of 396 Massachusetts school districts participated in the OFD – Schools Program in the latter half of 2025.

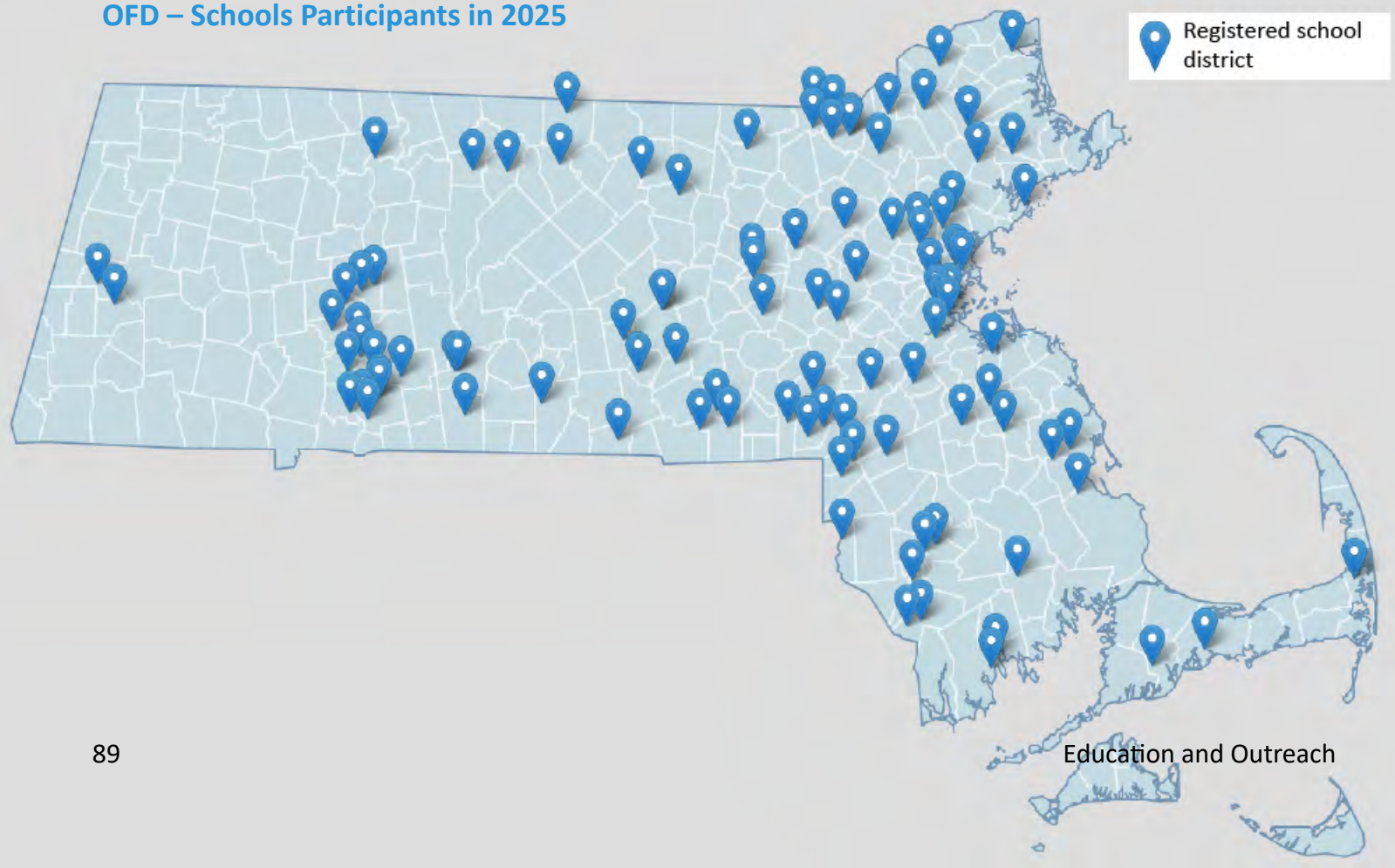
Public Procurement (Chapter 30B) Technical Assistance

The L&D Division provides technical assistance to the public regarding the interpretation and application of Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Uniform Procurement Act. Chapter 30B governs the sourcing and award of public contracts for supplies, services, and real property by cities, towns, and other local government jurisdictions, as well as the disposal of surplus supplies and real property. Chapter 30B helps to ensure open and fair competition by requiring that jurisdictions give qualified vendors an equal opportunity to be awarded government contracts.

The division's Public Procurement Technical Support helpdesk advises on questions regarding local purchasing requirements, fraud prevention, and internal controls, among other topics. Information on how individuals may submit questions via email, telephone, or online form is available on the OIG's website. Subject experts typically respond to inquiries by telephone within two business days. The Public Procurement Technical Support helpdesk fielded 1,167 inquiries in 2025.

A wide range of materials to inform government employees, vendors, and the general public about public procurement and contracting issues is available on the OIG's website.

OFD – Schools Participants in 2025



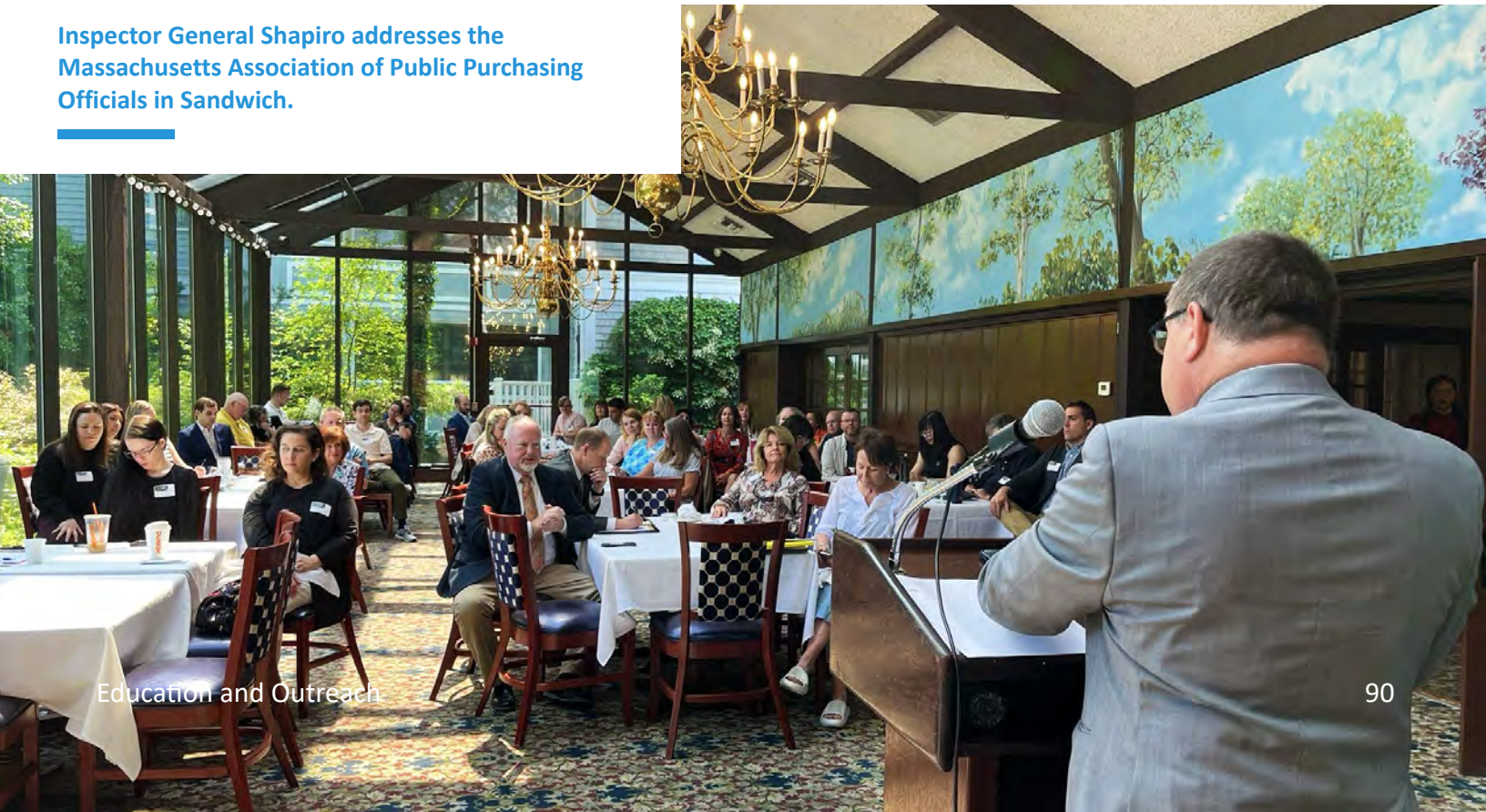
Outreach and Engagement

In line with its municipal oversight responsibilities, the OIG engages with municipalities and their leaders on a regular basis to gain insight into their day-to-day work and the challenges they face.

What began as a six-month listening tour has expanded into regular municipal engagements across the Commonwealth, from Newbury on the North Shore, to Martha's Vineyard, to Hancock in the Berkshires. Visiting cities and towns in every county helps the OIG gain a deep understanding of those doing the hard work of governing, day in and day out. Person-to-person conversations strengthen the lines of communication between the OIG and municipal leaders, informing the OIG's mission to make government work better tomorrow than it works today.

In 2025, the OIG met in person with 60 municipal leaders and leadership teams in their respective cities and towns. The municipal meetings covered topics including business continuity, public procurement, knowledge transfer, and public construction projects. The OIG has learned that municipal leaders are currently facing challenges with the cost and implementation of cybersecurity and information technology; balancing municipal budgets with the rising costs of healthcare, goods, and services; and local construction projects. These conversations facilitate discussions on the importance of team member education, employee training, internal controls, and clear policies to help tackle these challenges. They also promote the OIG's mission to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse of public resources.

Inspector General Shapiro addresses the Massachusetts Association of Public Purchasing Officials in Sandwich.



Significantly, these local meetings produce real results. From its municipal collaboration, the OIG:

1. **Launched the OIG Academy's "One Free Designee" program;**
2. **Developed the *OIG In Your Inbox* series of monthly publications focused on risk mitigation;**
3. **Introduced recently-enacted legislation that allows for the combined procurement of electric vehicles and their related charging infrastructure;**
4. **Introduced legislation to equalize Chapter 30B thresholds for municipalities procuring goods and services, to keep pace with current economic conditions;**
5. **Introduced legislation to exempt snow hauling and snow plowing services from procurement requirements; and**
6. **Shared resources on strengthening municipal cybersecurity.**

The OIG also met with leadership from 39 state and quasi-independent agencies to further promote the role of the OIG as resource for good governance. For example, Inspector General Shapiro addressed the Massachusetts State Police (MSP) command staff to explain how the OIG's Division of State Police Oversight works with MSP to monitor the quality, efficiency, and integrity of MSP operations, and to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse of public dollars in state police activities.

The OIG proactively met with key stakeholder groups such the Massachusetts Municipal Association, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation to strengthen the understanding of mutual goals of making government work better. Additionally, the OIG met with leadership at Berkshire Community College, Bridgewater State University, Greenfield Community College, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and UMass Amherst. This dialogue helps the OIG better understand the unique role and circumstances of public higher education institutions in Massachusetts, particularly their experiences and challenges with public procurement and their role in workforce development for state and municipal employees.

The OIG participated in seven municipal-related conferences and presentations in 2025: the Massachusetts Municipal Association's Connect 351 trade show, the MassBuys Expo, the Cape Cod Association of Public Procurement Officials, the Massachusetts Association of Public Procurement Officials, the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium, the Berkshire County Municipal Officials Networking Event, and the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts. These opportunities further expanded the OIG's accessibility and outreach to all professional government employees, leaders, and stakeholders, as well as the public and private partners that support their work.



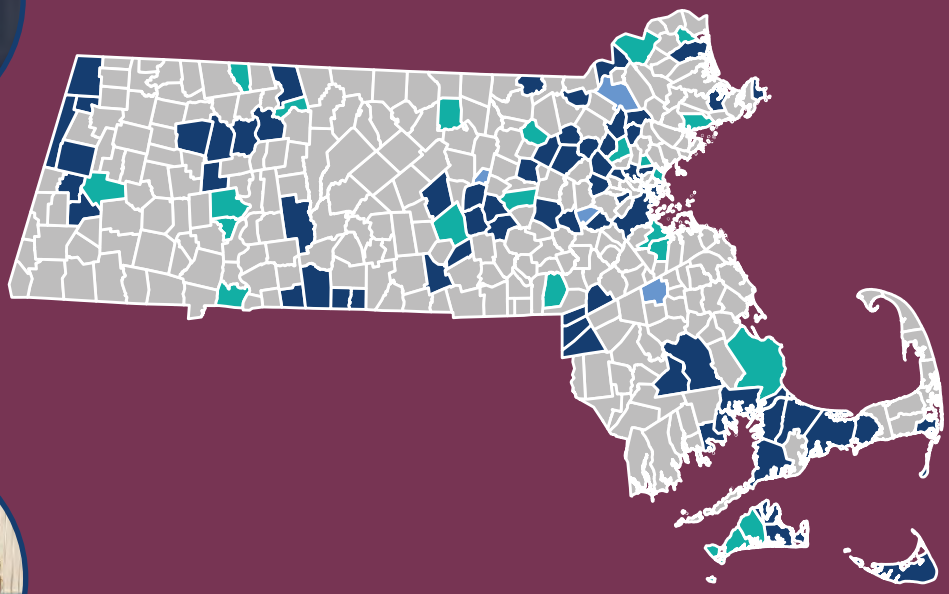




























Year Visited

- 2025
- 2024
- 2023
- Future Visit

Further Reading

The OIG publishes its reports, public letters, advisories, and the office newsletter, the *OIG Bulletin*, on its website. The OIG also publishes the Inspector General's legislative testimony and provides updates on criminal and civil matters in which the office was previously involved. This section lists the OIG's 2025 activities in these areas.

Reports

Pandemic Funding Oversight Quarterly Report: 2025 Fourth Quarter (January 15, 2026)

The Steamship Authority's Website Development Project: Poor Planning and Lax Oversight Wastes Millions (December 18, 2025)

Pandemic Funding Oversight Quarterly Report: 2025 Third Quarter (October 15, 2025)

Pandemic Funding Oversight Quarterly Report: 2025 Second Quarter (July 15, 2025)

2024 Annual Report (April 30, 2025)

Pandemic Funding Oversight Quarterly Report: 2025 First Quarter (April 15, 2025)

MassHealth and Health Safety Net: 2025 Annual Report (An Analysis of Health Safety Net Patients, Providers, and Services) (March 3, 2025)

Letters

Letter to Brockton Mayor, Brockton Public Schools Superintendent, Brockton Chief Financial Officer, and Massachusetts Department of Revenue Commissioner regarding the failures which led to Brockton Public Schools' historic FY23 budget deficit (December 3, 2025)





Letter to the Senate President, Speaker of the House, Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner, and New Bedford Port Authority Executive Director regarding the mismanagement of Pope's Island Marina in New Bedford (November 18, 2025)

Letter to Executive Office for Administration and Finance Secretary and Executive Office of Economic Development Secretary commending the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center's actions to reclaim tax incentives (November 3, 2025)

Letter to Hopkinton Town Manager, Hopkinton Select Board Chair, and Hopkinton Parks and Recreation Commission Chair regarding a former Parks and Recreation Department director's violation of procurement laws and cash handling policies (September 22, 2025)

Letter to Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational-Technical School District Committee Chair and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner regarding Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School's illegal procurement practices for several construction contracts and inadequate policies surrounding vehicle use (September 17, 2025)

Letter to MBTA General Manager regarding the MBTA's recent initiatives for fare collections (September 8, 2025)

Letter to MassDOT Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of Transportation regarding MassDOT's Highway Service Plazas Lease and Concessions Agreement (August 22, 2025)

Letter to Marshfield Interim Town Administrator regarding a town-issued RFP for the development of a solar array on town-owned land (August 22, 2025)

Letter to Bourne Water District Superintendent regarding a district-issued RFP for the lease of district-owned land and the subsequent lease agreement between the district and lessee (July 29, 2025)

Letter to Barre Select Board Chair, Barre Interim Town Administrator, and Barre DPW Commission Chair regarding the Barre DPW's lack of timekeeping controls (July 29, 2025)

Letter to Bourne Town Administrator regarding a proposed real property transaction between the town and a solar developer (July 11, 2025)

Letter to Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML) Director regarding the DFML's policies for Paid Family and Medical Leave for applicants who split their leave time to bond with a child (June 25, 2025)

Letter to Norfolk Town Administrator regarding a town-issued RFP for the lease of town-owned land and the subsequent lease agreement between the town and the lessee (June 9, 2025)

Letter to Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) Executive Director and CCC Acting Chair regarding CCC's failure to collect prorated and provisional license fees (March 27, 2025)

Letter to Orange Town Administrator and Orange Select Board Chair regarding the town's lack of formal policies and procedures regarding town credit card use by employees (March 18, 2025)

Letter to MBTA General Manager and CEO regarding the importance of MBTA fare collection on the commuter rail (March 4, 2025)

Letter to Everett City Council President regarding improper longevity payments made to the Mayor of Everett (February 27, 2025)

Letter to Cape Cod Gateway Airport Manager regarding the airport's use of COVID-19 grant funding (February 13, 2025)

OIG Advisories

OIG In Your Inbox: Documents and Resources for Consistent, Effective, and Ethical Governance (December 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Mitigate Risks Through Reasonable Timekeeping Controls (November 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Internal Controls for Public Works Departments (October 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Municipalities Can Mitigate Risks of Accepting Cash (September 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Strategies to Manage Mobile Devices (August 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Detect and Prevent Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Fraud (July 2025)

OIG In Your Inbox: Using Data to Guide Municipal Decisions (June 2025)

OIG Advisory: Practical Recommendations for Program Performance Management (February 6, 2025)





Guidance for Municipalities on Opioid Abatement Funds and Chapter 30B

OIG Bulletins

OIG Bulletin, Volume 6, Issue 4 (December 2025)

OIG Bulletin, Volume 6, Issue 3 (September 2025)

OIG Bulletin, Volume 6, Issue 2 (June 2025)

OIG Bulletin, Volume 6, Issue 1 (April 2025)

Case Updates

South Carolina man charged with $1.2 million Covid relief fraud

Boston-area landlord pleads guilty to pandemic relief fraud charges

Former director of Boston nonprofit pleads guilty to fraud charges

Former Ware fire chief pleads guilty to embezzling over $20,000 from the town of Ware and three regional nonprofit fire associations

Former Medfield Parks and Recreation director pleads guilty to stealing public funds

Former Leyden police chief ordered to pay restitution in theft of town property

Former head of children's daycare indicted for stealing nearly $127,000

Florida woman sentenced to 10 months in prison for pandemic relief fraud

Inspector General's Legislative Testimony

Inspector General's Testimony before the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government regarding House 56, *An Act Empowering Municipalities and Local Governments* (October 28, 2025) and accompanying letter

Inspector General's Letter to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security in support of the creation of a Municipal and Public Safety Building Authority (October 16, 2025)

Inspector General's Letter to the Chairs of the Joint Committee on Public Service in opposition to post-retirement employment exemptions (September 30, 2025)

Inspector General's Letter to the Senate and House Chairs of the Committee on Public Service regarding critical shortage waivers (September 22, 2025)

Inspector General's Testimony before the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government regarding House 16, *An Act Relative to County Land Disposition* (July 22, 2025)

Inspector General's Testimony before the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight regarding House 12, *An Act Updating Chapter 30B*, and House 13, *An Act Relative to Snow Hauling and Removal* (July 15, 2025)

Inspector General's Letter to the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy regarding House 15, *An Act Relative to Retail Electricity Suppliers* (June 3, 2025)

Inspector General's Testimony before the Rhode Island House Finance Committee regarding Rhode Island House 5997*, An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – Inspector General* (April 9, 2025)

Inspector General's Testimony before the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget (March 6, 2025)

Pictured:
Worcester City Hall



Acknowledgments

In the wake of the Ward Commission's investigation into widespread corruption in the awarding of state and county building contracts, passage of the legislation creating this office was not a foregone conclusion. There was significant debate over the proposed office's jurisdiction and fear that it would usurp the power of the attorney general and act as a "fourth branch of government." Proposals to limit the Inspector General's subpoena power to records and documents, to curb the Inspector General's authority to summon witnesses, and to allow for the Inspector General's removal without cause were fortunately not passed.

The resulting statute, Chapter 12A of the Massachusetts General Laws – in addition to the controls provided by the Inspector General Council – provides this office with the appropriate powers and independence to enable it to deliver effective oversight of state and municipal government. This is not something I, nor any of us, should take for granted.

With over 34 years of experience in government service, I am keenly aware that no accomplishment is singularly achieved. Democracy, by its nature, demands collaboration, shared values, and steadfast commitment to the public we serve. As Inspector General, I am indebted to my colleagues in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, municipal leaders, department heads, local elected officials, and leaders of independent and quasi-public agencies. While we may not always agree, we share the principles and ideals that make our government what it is.

As always, I have tremendous gratitude for the over 90 investigators, attorneys, analysts, administrative staff, and other professionals who comprise the OIG team. The detailed work they do is difficult and stressful, and not glamorous. Yet, they perform it with professionalism and dedication. As their leader, I have set an ambitious agenda – as the contents of this report attest – and they have met and continue to meet the moment.



Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG
Inspector General
April 30, 2026

Endnotes

1. Monica Cannon-Grant was ordered by a federal judge to pay $224,000 in restitution in March 2026.

2. Kevin Ryder was ordered to pay $85,547 in restitution to the town of Medfield in March 2026.

3. MASS. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., *ANNUAL REPORT 1995,* available at https://www.mass.gov/doc/oig-1995-annual-report.

4. MASS. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., *ANNUAL REPORT 1996,* available at https://www.mass.gov/doc/oig-1996-annual-report.

5. MASS. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., *ANNUAL REPORT 1995,* available at https://www.mass.gov/doc/oig-1995-annual-report.

6. MASS. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., *A REVIEW OF THE CENTRAL ARTERY/TUNNEL PROJECT COST RECOVERY PROGRAM* (2000), available at https://www.mass.gov/doc/a-review-of-the-central-arterytunnel-project-cost-recovery-program-december-2000.

7. Full engagement workers play a vital role in administering the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children work programs, including identifying appropriate programs and vendors for clients, assisting with case management and maintenance, processing extensions, and delivering orientation to new work program clients.

8. The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition* (2013), defines "pica" as eating nonnutritive, nonfood substances over a period of at least one month.

9. In DDS's participant-directed service program model, individuals and their families design customized supports, direct their services, and hire and manage support workers. DDS contracts with the financial management services vendor to manage payments to employees and reimbursements to participants.

10. When the DSPO asked the MSP to review the eight shifts in which troopers were not in high visibility areas, the MSP responded that, in its determination, the troopers were in appropriate locations.

11. During the initiation of this review in 2024, the DSPO analyzed over 600 Highway Safety overtime shifts that troopers worked in 2021 and 2023. The DSPO used data and records to determine whether OICs complied with the MSP order for physical observation, roll call, and debriefing. This review did not reveal instances of fraud, waste, or abuse, but found some inconsistencies among OICs' application of the order requiring physical observation, roll call, and debriefing. *See* MASS. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, *2024 ANNUAL REPORT,* available at https://www.mass.gov/doc/oig-2024-annual-report.

12. These shifts typically involve four troopers working as a team, including the OIC.

13. *See* IACP Concepts and Issues Paper, October 2002.

14. *See* IACP Model Policy for Inspections, April 2002.

15. At the end of the course, an instructor explained the circumstances of the overtime abuse in Troop E. The DSPO found that the instructor only began to fully explain the overtime abuse after learning that the majority of recruits in the class were not familiar with the circumstances that led to Troop E's dissolution.

16. At the beginning of the course, the instructor discussed that after the "Turnpike scandal" people believed that troopers were reporting unworked overtime and writing false tickets.

17. In March 2026, the MSP achieved re-accreditation through MPAC.

18. MPAC was established in October 1996 through the combined efforts of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Coalition, and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). Pursuant to Executive Order 392, MPAC was initially created as a state agency within EOPSS, mandated to oversee accreditation for police organizations throughout the Commonwealth. In February 2004, MPAC transitioned from a state agency to a private nonprofit organization.

19. To earn MPAC certification, a police agency must demonstrate compliance with 159 mandatory standards. To earn MPAC accreditation, a police agency must demonstrate compliance with 257 mandatory standards, as well as certain optional standards. MPAC requires a police agency to achieve certification before it will assess the agency for accreditation. *The Standards,* THE MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION, https://masspoliceaccred.net/standards/ (last visited April 15, 2026).

20. M.G.L. c. 6C, § 9.

21. During the 2009 merger of all state transportation agencies, the former Massachusetts Turnpike Authority became a part of MassDOT, the then-newly established state department of transportation.

22. Formally known as an "Act Providing for the Delivery of State Services in a Fiscally Responsible Manner," the Taxpayer Protection Act is codified at M.G.L. c. 7, §§ 52-55. It is also known as the "Pacheco Law," named after the legislation's sponsor, Sen. Marc R. Pacheco.

23. *See* Section 196 of Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2015.

24. *A Review of the MBTA's Absence Management Contract with Workpartners* (October 17, 2022); *A Review of the MBTA's Police Dispatch Services Contract with IXP Corporation* (December 23, 2022); *A Review of the MBTA's In-Station Customer Service Contract with Block by Block* (July 26, 2023); *A Review of the MBTA's Police Dispatch Services Contract with IXP Corporation: Supplemental Report* (December 27, 2023); *MBTA Privatization #4: Customer Service Call Center Contract with Global Contact Services (2017 – 2018) and Exela Technologies (2018 – 2024)* (November 21, 2024).

25. M.G.L. c. 30, § 36.

26. The NEVI program provides federal funding to states that meet certain requirements for the construction of EV charging stations. States must contribute a minimum 20% non-federal match for project costs. To receive NEVI funding, states must develop, submit, and update State EV Infrastructure Deployment Plans to the FHWA. States resubmit their plans annually. States are then required to spend NEVI funds in accordance with their approved deployment plans.

27. CRRC MA was formerly known as CNR MA Corporation. CNR MA Corporation and its predecessor entities are controlled by CRRC Corporation Limited (CRRC), a Chinese state-owned and publicly traded rolling stock manufacturer. CRRC is the largest rolling stock manufacturer in the world in terms of revenue, operating 46 wholly/majority-owned subsidiaries with over 170,000 employees worldwide. CRRC traces its manufacturing history in China back to the 1950s.

28. *See* https://www.mass.gov/how-to/report-disability-parking-abuse.

29. Construction projects typically involve three phases that run sequentially: planning, design, and construction. However, under the construction management at-risk model, the awarding authority uses a two-phase selection process and hires a construction manager early in the design process to later oversee construction. The awarding authority and construction manager negotiate a maximum price for the project during the design phase. The method is "at risk" because the construction manager is responsible for any costs exceeding that amount. There is a third model for public works projects called the design-build model. In the design-build model, design and construction are combined into a single stage. The awarding authority executes a contract with a single entity – *e.g.*, a design-build firm, joint venture, or contractor that subcontracts with a designer – to design and construct the project. To use the CM at-risk or design-build models on projects of $5 million or more, an awarding authority (except for certain exempt agencies) must apply to the OIG for approval to proceed.

30. The OIG reviewed an application for the Town of Dedham Oakdale Elementary School project. During the OIG's review period, town voters failed to approve funding, and the town withdrew the project.

31. Funding for the Neary Elementary School project was ultimately not approved by Southborough voters.

32. *See* Section 2A of Chapter 7 of the Acts of 2025.

33. *See* Section 82 of Chapter 14 of the Acts of 2025.

34. *See* Section 164 of Chapter 73 of the Acts of 2025.

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Making Government Work Better Tomorrow Than It Works Today

Report Suspected Fraud, Waste, and Abuse to the OIG Fraud Hotline At
1-800-322-1323
IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov

Have a Question About Chapter 30B? Send Us An Email At
OIGProcurementSupport@mass.gov

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