



Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc.

P.O. Box 1489 ~ Tallahassee, FL 32308
(800) 558-0218 ~ (850) 410-7200

February 21, 2018

Inspector General John Carey
Palm Beach County Office of the Inspector General
100 South Australian Avenue, 4th Floor
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

Dear Inspector General Carey:

Congratulations!

We are pleased to inform you the Palm Beach County, Office of Inspector General has met the required standards to become reaccredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

Your reaccredited status is official as of this date and will remain in effect for a period of three years. Compliance with any future standards approved by the Commission that may be applicable to your department is part of maintaining your accredited status.

You and your agency are to be commended for your continued diligence, professionalism, and commitment in maintaining this highest recognition among Florida's inspector general community.

We look forward to working with you and your agency in your continuous pursuit of excellence. On behalf of the Commission, we extend our thanks for your participation and congratulations on a job well done!

Sincerely,

Lori Mizell
Executive Director

To: Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc.
From: Lieutenant Marie Clark, Team Leader
Date: December 11, 2017
Re: Office of Inspector General, Palm Beach County
Full Compliance Assessment Report

A. Agency/Assessment Information

John A. Carey, Inspector General
Cynthia Suriel, Accreditation Manager

Standards Manual Version: 2.03

Previous Accreditation Dates:

February 2012

February 2015

Assessment Team Recommendation: Reaccreditation

Assessment Team

Team Leader: Lieutenant Marie T. Clark
Florida State University Police Department
Mclark2@fsu.edu

Investigator Anthony Jackson
Florida Department of Education
Anthony.jackson@fdloe.org

B. Standards Summary Tally

Status	Mandatory Standards	% of	Other-than-mandatory Standards	% of	Total Standards
		Applicable		Applicable	
In compliance	39	100.0%	0	0.0%	39
Not in compliance	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Not applicable	7	17.9%	0	0.0%	7
Elected 20%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Not Set	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Total:	46		0		46

Total Applicable Other-than-mandatory Standards	0
Maximum allowable number of Elected Standards	0

C. Agency Profile

The Office of Inspector General (OIG), Palm Beach County, Florida was authorized pursuant to County ordinance (2009-049) in December 2009. The OIG was created to restore public trust in government. The OIG provides an independent oversight authority to ensure accountability, transparency and efficiencies in local government. To ensure the independence of the OIG, policy requires the Inspector General be selected by the Inspector General (IG) Committee (Commission on Ethics, State Attorney, and Public Defender) and report to the citizens of Palm Beach County.

In June 2014, the IG Committee selected Inspector General John A. Carey to replace former Inspector General Sheryl Steckler who served from May 2010 to June 2014. The OIG's initial jurisdiction when it opened its office doors on May 28, 2010 was limited to that of the County and its Departments. However, in the November 2010 general election, voters elected to put all 38 municipalities under the OIG jurisdiction. Subsequently, the Solid Waste Authority and Children's Services Council voluntarily came under the jurisdiction of the OIG.

The OIG plays a significant role in the furtherance of ethics reform in Palm Beach County. Enabling legislation outlines the OIG's purpose to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and its priority to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in programs and operations administered or financed by the public entities within OIG jurisdiction. To that end, the Inspector General has established an infrastructure with the capacity, diversity, and flexibility to address each complaint in a timely manner. The dynamics of having over forty separate, and at times competing, entities within its jurisdiction require the OIG to be sensitive to the varying capacity levels among the entities. The diversity of

OIG staff education, training, and certifications reflects the OIG's ability to succeed and accomplish its mission of "*Enhancing Public Trust in Government.*" Furthermore, the professional ethics and personal behavior of the OIG staff are of great significance. Every employee must maintain unassailably high ethical standards, faithful obedience to the law, a strict avoidance of even the appearance of unethical behavior, and an unrelenting self-discipline for independent and objective thoughts and work habits.

The OIG currently has an annual budget of \$3.1 million and a staff of 21 centrally located within Palm Beach County, the third most populous county in Florida. The combined FY 2018 budgets of the public entities within OIG jurisdiction total \$7.5 billion and encompass more than 13,000 employees. There are three separate units within the OIG: Audit, Investigations, and Contract Oversight.

The Investigations Unit consists of an Intake section that is responsible for receiving complaints involving fraud, waste, misconduct, mismanagement, and other abuses. Each complaint is considered for its qualification under Florida Statutes 112.3187 – 112.31895, also known as the "Whistle-Blower's Act." The Investigations Unit coordinates inquiries and referrals and conducts investigations and management reviews involving elected and appointed officials, employees, agencies, instrumentalities, contractors, their subcontractors and lower tier sub-contractors and other parties doing business with and or receiving funds from any of the over forty public entities within the OIG jurisdiction. Once completed, investigations and reviews are submitted to the head of the affected public entity, the IG Committee, and posted to the OIG website. The OIG Investigations Unit highlights the implementation of its paperless, web-based case management system that incorporates accreditation standards (Inspector General Information Management System – IGIMS) into all work products.

The OIG conducted 16 investigations during this accreditation cycle: 6 investigations were conducted in year one, 5 investigations were conducted in year 2 and 5 investigations were conducted in year 3.

D. Assessment Summary

On October 20, 2017, the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Palm Beach County provided the assessment team with a pre-read assessment packet. The packet included a welcome letter, self-assessment status report, compliance tally, prior assessment final report, itinerary and the latest OIG annual report. The team was also provided a copy of the Written Directive System policy which describes their process for developing written directives and procedures and the Investigative Unit Directives Manual. Team Leader Clark and Assessor Jackson corresponded prior to the assessment. Chapter assignments, Commission philosophy and strategy were discussed.

On November 8, 2017, the team met Accreditation Manager Cynthia Suriel at the OIG Office in West Palm Beach. The team was escorted to the OIG Office and introduced to Inspector General John A. Carey and other staff members.

An entrance briefing was held, during which time the team was provided with an overview of the Office. In attendance were Inspector General John Carey, General Counsel/Deputy IG Kalinthia Dillard, Director of Investigations Stuart Robinson, Intake Manager Evangeline Rentz and Accreditation Manager Cynthia Suriel.

Following the entrance interview, the team was escorted through the work area of the OIG and provided with a tour of the facilities. The team was escorted to the designated area which was well organized and accommodating.

The remainder of the day was spent conducting a review of the files provided to meet the accreditation standards. Interviews were conducted with members of the staff relative to the standards being reviewed. During the file review process members remained accessible to the team for interviews and observations. The electronic assessment and supporting documents were well organized. This allowed the team to easily navigate through the assessment and verify compliance.

The assessors had interaction with each member of the unit during the assessment. Each member spoke highly of the agency and expressed support and commitment to the accreditation process. All agency members interviewed by the team articulated a high degree of knowledge related to their individual areas of responsibility.

After the completion of the file review and finalizing the assessment, an exit interview was conducted. In attendance were Inspector General John Carey, General Counsel/Deputy IG Kalinthia Dillard, Director of Investigations Stuart Robinson, Intake Manager Evangeline Rentz and Accreditation Manager Cynthia Suriel. Each team member provided an oral review of their assessment and contact with members of the Office.

The assessment team advised Inspector General Carey and his staff the team would make a recommendation to the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation that the Office of Inspector General, Palm Beach County be awarded reaccreditation at the next Commission meeting.

Key employee interviews:

Inspector General John A. Carrey
Accreditation Manager Cynthia Suriel
Director of Investigations Stuart Robinson
Intake Manager Evangeline Rentz
Investigator Jean Ariola

E. Standards Noncompliance Discussion: None.

F. Corrective Action Discussion: None.

G. Standards Elected for Exemption (20 Percent): None.

H. Standards Verified by the Team as “Not Applicable” to the Agency

3.03M (MC)	3.04M (MC)	5.02M (AJ)
5.04M (AJ)	7.01M (AJ)	7.03M (AJ)
7.05M (AJ)		

I. Standards, the Status of Which, Were Changed by Assessors

J. Public Information Activities: None.

K. Exemplary Policies/Projects/Procedures

Auditors and investigators within offices of inspectors general and internal auditor departments have been personally threatened because of the work they do. However, until the passage of a new law in Florida, these auditors and investigators did not have the same protections for their personal information that other government employees enjoyed. The Palm Beach County Office of Inspector General led an initiative to change Florida state law to protect our personnel and their families. On March 30, 2016, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed into law Senate Bill 752. This law exempted from the Florida public records requirements certain personal information of personnel employed with agency offices of inspectors general or internal audit departments. Pursuant to such law, governmental entities are no longer required to provide in response to a public records request the home address, telephone numbers, dates of birth, and photographs of current or former personnel in an agency’s office of inspector general or internal audit department whose duties include auditing or investigating activities that could lead to criminal prosecution or administrative discipline. The law also exempts the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, dates of birth, and places of employment of spouses and children, and the locations of schools and day care facilities attended by children of covered personnel.

L. Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNING PRINCIPLES (Assessor MC)

The OIG policies and procedures clearly define the purpose, authority and responsibilities of the Inspector General investigative function. The OIG mission statement and organizational charts were observed to be prominently framed and posted within the OIG work area and are available to all members electronically.

All members of the OIG are required to abide by the Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees. Expectations related to the Code of Ethics and statements of Independence from Impairments are distinct and direct. The written directive system is

clear and concise. Each member has completed the annual attestation of independence from impairments.

Chapter 2: PERSONNEL PRACTICES (Assessor MC)

The OIG has a directive that defines qualifications for investigative staff members. Those members are required to possess, prior to initial hiring, a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university or relevant employment experience. All members interviewed had a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Additionally, the Inspector General is required to ensure each investigative member possesses the necessary skills to conduct investigations.

Staff members sign their individualized position descriptions which provide a detailed accounting of work expectations. Each member of the OIG is evaluated annually in accordance with agency policy. The Inspector General is responsible for reviewing the completed performance evaluation of each Office member.

Chapter 3: TRAINING (Assessor MC)

New investigative personnel are required to complete orientation training on a number of required topics within six months of hire. A completed New Member Training and Orientation Checklist showed compliance with the standard.

All investigative members are required to attend 40 hours of documented continuing education every two years. Training records are tracked electronically and with hard copy files. All investigative members exceeded the required amount of continued education training.

Standards 3.03M and 3.04M were confirmed as non-applicable since this office does not employ sworn members.

Chapter 4: INVESTIGATION PROCESS (Assessor MC)

The OIG has procedures in place which clearly outline the process for handling complaints, conducting investigations, and securing records. The OIG has a structured system for the initial intake, review, and assignment of all complaints received by the office, as well as a detailed process for initiating, conducting and reporting all investigative activities. Requirements addressing the responsibility of due professional care throughout the process are present in their directives.

Interviews with staff revealed their practices mirror their policies for the investigative process. Completed work products were reviewed and found to include all elements required by the standards.

The OIG maintains a full time general counsel who assists in reviewing cases at all stages to determine scope of authority, legal sufficiency and findings.

Chapter 5: Case Supporting Materials and Evidence (Assessor AJ)

The OIG records are neatly stored and secured. Although the OIG does not maintain evidence at their location, all case supporting documentation is maintained by the case investigator in a secure area at their workstation. The accreditation manager has access to the area where the documentation is stored with the case files.

Chapter 6: Whistle-Blower's Act (Assessor AJ)

The OIG has thorough policies and procedures to ensure proper investigations comply with Florida Statute regarding Whistle-blower's Act allegations. The Act provides for specific definitions of Whistle-blower's Act allegations, information, and confidentiality. The Intake Manager reviews and assesses each initial complaint to determine if the provisions of the Whistle-blower's Act could apply. The Intake Manager documents the review of the provisions if they do not apply. During the determination of initial assessment, the Intake Manager will complete a Whistle-blower Complaint Determination form which is reviewed by the Investigations Manager and Inspector General. All files within the Intake Manager's office were organized, secured within a filing cabinet and locked office.

Palm Beach County Ordinance No. 2011-009, Section 2-427 establishes procedures for finalization of reports and recommendations which make findings as to the person or entity being reviewed or inspected. This ordinance states whenever the Inspector General determines it is appropriate to publish and deliver a report or recommendation which contains findings as to the person or entity being reported on or who is the subject of the recommendation, the Inspector General shall provide the affected person or entity a copy of the findings. Any timely submitted written explanation or rebuttal shall be attached to the finalized report or recommendations.

The ordinance specifically excludes from its provisions, matters subject to the Florida Whistle-blowers Act. Therefore, the provisions for the Whistle-blowers to respond to the final report, and procedures for dissemination of the final report to mandated recipients do not apply to the OIG.

Chapter 7: Notification Process (Assessor AJ)

The standards outlined in this chapter address the procedures for non-state agency Offices of Inspectors General to notify contracted entities and individuals substantially affected by the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of Offices of Inspectors General investigative reports within their jurisdictions of their opportunity to respond to final investigative reports. The chapter further addresses the procedures for non-state agency Offices of Inspectors General to make appropriate notifications within their organizations when complaints are received from contracted entities and individuals substantially affected by the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of an Offices of Inspectors General investigative report.

The OIG has established detailed procedures for providing copies of investigative findings to individuals substantially affected which they define as all elected and appointed county/municipal officials and employees, county, or municipal agencies. The OIG has established detailed and specific procedures to address complaints or allegations of misconduct related to the OIG or its employees. Appropriate proofs for each standard were provided and accreditation standards were met within this chapter.

Chapter 8: Case Management (Assessor AJ)

The OIG exercises tight controls over case management and confidentiality of files. All documents and data are protected and stored within the Inspector General Information Management System which is supported by the Palm Beach County OIG staff. The Accreditation Manager confirmed tight controls are utilized over case management and confidential information. All requirements for standards 8.01M and 8.02M were observed within the Inspector General Information Management System. Files were organized and clearly labeled. The electronic and paper files observed were consistent and contained all information relative to the intake process, interviews, and referral information if applicable.

Records were destroyed within the re-accreditation cycle and documented in a well-maintained log.

Chapter 9: Final Reporting Processes (Assessor AJ)

The OIG policies and procedures clearly address investigative conclusions, distribution of final reports, post investigative responses, and notification of criminal allegations. Additionally, the OIG made required notifications to appropriate law enforcement officials during the review period. A sufficient quantity of review and response documentation was provided for review.

M. Summary and Recommendation

The assessment team was impressed by Inspector General Carey and all members of the OIG. The OIG operates in a highly professional manner and displayed a solid commitment to the accreditation process. It was apparent all members are supportive of this commitment and are driven to provide excellent, professional, and dedicated service to all of the components of the OIG.

Inspector General Carey and other members of the OIG were very accommodating and confirmed through interviews and observation the OIG's policies are integrated into the way they do business.

The assessment team is in full agreement that the OIG be favorably reviewed for reaccreditation status by the Commission at the next scheduled Commission meeting.

Submitted by: Marie Clark, Team Leader