



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General
City Hall, Suite 635
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 24, 2026

Baltimore City Inspector General Files Suit to Protect OIG's Independence and Authority

Baltimore, Maryland — Baltimore City Inspector General Isabel Mercedes Cumming has filed a lawsuit in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City seeking a declaration confirming the Office of the Inspector General's ("OIG") independence and subpoena authority under the Baltimore City Charter. The lawsuit also seeks injunctive relief to prevent interference with the OIG's investigations and confidential systems. Inspector General Cumming is joined in the lawsuit by the Chairperson and Secretary of the OIG Advisory Board, a citizen-based entity charged with overseeing the OIG's operations.

The City Charter charges the OIG with investigating complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse and promoting efficiency, accountability, and integrity in City government. In 2018, the Charter was amended to establish the OIG as an independent office governed by an independent Advisory Board. In 2022, voters overwhelmingly approved changes to further insulate the Advisory Board from political influence, establishing that its membership would be comprised of citizens, rather than political appointees.

Inspector General Cumming's lawsuit comes on the heels of the City's recent refusal to comply with OIG subpoenas by attempting to recast them as requests under the Maryland Public Information Act ("MPIA"). The Complaint explains that the Baltimore City Charter expressly authorizes the OIG to issue subpoenas and to enforce those subpoenas "in any court of competent jurisdiction." The lawsuit further details the City's production of heavily redacted records in response to OIG subpoenas and the City's actions that have hampered the OIG's ability to monitor its confidential investigative database.

"The Office of the Inspector General is the office of the people," said Cummings. "In 2022, when asked, the public mandated a citizen Advisory Board by an 87% vote." The Advisory Board, which previously was comprised of city officials, including the Mayor and the City Solicitor, was altered by the voters of Baltimore to ensure the Board was free from political interference. "Today, as the Inspector General and with members of the OIG Advisory Board, we file this action for the residents and taxpayers of Baltimore City to allow the OIG to do the job the people have asked it to do. This fight is for the people and, as I always say, never underestimate the power of the people."

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

HOTLINE: 443-984-3476/800-417-0430 EMAIL: OIG@BALTIMORECITY.GOV WEBSITE: OIG.BALTIMORECITY.GOV



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General
City Hall, Suite 635
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202



“The OIG’s independence is not a formality—it is the safeguard that allows whistleblowers to come forward and enables unbiased oversight of City government,” said Cumming’s counsel, H. Mark Stichel of RKW Law. Cumming is also represented by Anthony May of Nusinov Smith LLP. “The City’s unprecedented attack on the OIG’s independence should concern every person living here,” said May.

Cumming alleges that she has had direct access to information from City offices since 2018. In June 2025, the City suddenly departed from its longstanding practice of cooperating with the OIG, instead asserting for the very first time in OIG history that subpoenas issued by the OIG are subject to the MPIA. The City has also claimed that information must be shielded from the OIG due to attorney client privilege. According to Cumming, “My goal in this lawsuit is to merely require the City to do what it has done since I took office – provide the OIG with the information it needs to ensure taxpayer dollars aren’t being wasted by government officials.”

Cumming’s complaint can be downloaded [here](#).



H. Mark Stichel, Esq. RKW, LLC 443-379-8987 HMStichel@RKWlawgroup.com
For additional information, please contact:



Anthony May, Esq. Nusinov Smith LLP 410-554-3606 amay@nusinovsmith.com

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

HOTLINE: 443-984-3476/800-417-0430 EMAIL: OIG@BALTIMORECITY.GOV WEBSITE: OIG.BALTIMORECITY.GOV