



**CITY OF
ATLANTA**
City Auditor's Office
Amanda Noble, City
Auditor
404.330.6452

June 28, 2018

Highlights:

Why We Did This Investigation

In April 2017, our office received information alleging that a city employee was unfairly allocating overtime to her family members over other Department of Aviation employees. As a result, we conducted an investigation as part of our responsibility under the Atlanta City Code.

Distribution

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms,
Mayor of Atlanta

President Felicia A. Moore and
Members, Atlanta City Council

Richard Cox, Chief Operating
Officer

Nina Hickson, Interim City
Attorney

Marian Woods, Department of
Human Resources
Commissioner

Balam Bheodari, Interim
Department of Aviation General
Manager

Investigation Report:

Allegations of Unfair Overtime Allocation in the Department of Aviation

The purpose of this report is to inform you of the results of a recent investigation conducted by the City Auditor's Investigations Unit.

Objective

Our objective was to determine if Theresa Williams has family members working within the Department of Aviation and if she abused her position to unfairly allocate overtime to family members over other employees.

Background

In April 2017, we received an allegation from an anonymous informant that Theresa Williams, Department of Aviation facilities maintenance office manager, abused her position to unfairly allocate overtime to her family members over other employees.

During the investigation, we determined that Williams has family members working in the Department of Aviation facilities maintenance, including her son, Ti'Rone Smith, and her nephew, Jordan Smith, both facilities maintenance mechanics, and her husband, Rodney Williams, senior facilities maintenance mechanic. However, both Ti'Rone Smith and Jordan Smith failed to disclose their relationships with family members working at the city in their employment applications. In an interview with us, Theresa Williams admitted that she failed to disclose her relationships with Ti'Rone and Jordan Smith to the Department of Aviation.

What We Found

We found evidence indicating that Theresa Williams has the opportunity to allocate overtime to her family members. Williams admitted to allocating overtime to her family members over other aviation employees on one occasion. However, during the time period of 12/29/2016 to 5/3/2017, we found evidence of seven instances in which her family members received overtime without signing up over other employees who had signed up for the same project. The actions of Williams appear to constitute violations of the following criteria:

- City Code Section 114-133 – Overtime states that employees within each department who normally perform the same type of work shall receive equal opportunity for overtime work.

As the Department of Aviation facilities maintenance office manager since 2006, Theresa Williams is responsible for maintaining records of overtime worked by each employee within the department and maintaining employee availability for overtime projects. Williams is also responsible for posting and collecting overtime sign-up sheets and attending meetings in which management selects employees to work overtime.

In an interview with us, Williams said that employees call her requesting that she add them to overtime sign-up sheets and she confirmed that she has added her family members among others to overtime sign-up sheets. Williams also stated that she is responsible for finding employees to work overtime projects if they are needed on short notice or for holidays. Williams specified one instance when the department did not have enough employees to work an overtime project during a holiday and she contacted her son, Ti'Rone, to work.

We analyzed overtime hours worked by employees in the Department of Aviation facilities maintenance for the period of 12/29/2016 to 5/3/2017 and identified that Jordan Smith and Ti'Rone Smith ranked first and third over their peers with the same job title in the total amount of overtime worked. Jordan Smith worked 307 hours of overtime, 73 hours more than the employee ranked second in overtime hours worked. Ti'Rone Smith worked 203 overtime hours, 67 more hours than the next highest employee with the same job title. The top 5 out of 20 total employees with the highest overtime worked comprised approximately 60% of the overall overtime work by facilities maintenance mechanics. Rodney Williams worked 172 hours of overtime, ranking 11th out of 68 among his peers with the same job title.

We also analyzed overtime project documentation for the period of 12/29/2016 to 5/3/2017 and found evidence indicating that Ti'Rone Smith and Jordan Smith were allocated overtime when they did not sign up to work and that they received overtime opportunities over other employees who had signed up to work. In addition, the department was unable to provide supporting documentation with approval for overtime hours worked, specifically, 66 hours worked by Jordan Smith, 10 hours worked by Ti'Rone Smith, and 45 hours worked by Rodney Williams.

These acts appear to constitute violations of the following criteria:

- City Code Section 114-133 – Overtime

We found evidence indicating that both Ti'Rone Smith and Jordan Smith falsified their city employment applications regarding family members working for the City of Atlanta. The actions of Ti'Rone and Jordan appear to constitute violations of the following criteria:

- City Code Section 114-528(b)(12) – Cause for action states that the following actions constitute cause for which disciplinary action may be imposed, but the imposition of disciplinary action shall not be limited to such offenses: (12) Willful making of false statements to the public, supervisors, officials, boards, department heads or agencies or the willful making of false statements on an employment application within the city.

We determined that both Ti'Rone and Jordan Smith answered "No" to the question, "Do you have any relatives working for the City of Atlanta" on their employment applications while their family members, Theresa Williams and Rodney Williams, worked in the department where they were applying for employment. In an interview with us, both Ti'Rone and Jordan Smith admitted that they did not make an accurate statement on their employment application regarding family members working at the city. They said they withheld the information for fear that they would not be hired.

These acts appear to constitute violations of the following criteria:

- City Code Section 114-528(b)(12) – Cause for action

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance we received from personnel in the Department of Aviation and Department of Human Resources during this investigation.



Amanda Noble, City Auditor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Amanda Noble, City Auditor
City Auditor's Office

FROM: Balram Bheodari, Interim Airport General Manager *BB BMS*
Department of Aviation

DATE: June 26, 2018

RE: Audit Investigation of Unfair Overtime Allocation – Management Response

The Department of Aviation has received the draft audit report dated May 31, 2018. The results of the investigation have been reviewed by senior leadership of the department, and corrective actions have been implemented. The Department of Aviation is very concerned about the judicious use of overtime hours to meet operational need, the equitable allocation of any overtime opportunities, and the unwavering commitment to honesty and integrity in the organization. We will use the findings to further the continuous improvement of the department.

Specific actions are being taken to address key findings of the audit.

- 1. FINDING:** Evidence indicates that employees were allocated overtime when they did not sign up to work, and that they received opportunities above other employees.

ACTION: Assistant Directors and Shift Supervisors approve posting of all overtime needs and allocation of overtime opportunities among interested employees. They do audits at the close of each pay period to ensure equitable distribution of opportunities to work overtime.
- 2. FINDING:** The department was unable to provide supporting documentation with approval for overtime hours worked by Ti'Rone Smith, Jordan Smith and Rodney Williams.

ACTION: Theresa Williams, the employee found to be allocating overtime without appropriate documentation, has been removed from the process of overtime allocation. Assistant Directors and Shift Supervisors do audits at the close of each pay period to ensure that overtime hours worked are justified and explained by operational need.
- 3. FINDING:** Evidence indicates that employee Theresa Williams on multiple occasions allocated overtime to family members over other employees who had signed up for the same project.

ACTION: Theresa Williams was removed from the process of overtime allocation. Disciplinary action is pending.
- 4. FINDING:** Employees Ti'Rone Smith and Jordan Smith admitted that they did not make accurate statements on their employment applications.

ACTION: Disciplinary action has been taken in both cases based on falsification of application.

The Department of Aviation is committed to operating at the highest ethical standard. We appreciate the Auditor's office for bringing this situation to our attention so that it can be speedily rectified.

