

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
CITY OF BALTIMORE



Isabel Mercedes Cumming
Inspector General

Investigative
Report Synopsis

OIG Case # 26-0025-I

Issued: May 19 2026



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



May 19, 2026

Dear Citizens of Baltimore City,

The mission of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is to independently promote accountability, efficiency, and integrity in City government, as well as to independently investigate complaints of fraud, financial waste, and abuse. The following synopsis is a condensed version of the full report provided to City management officials and does not contain all investigative information. This investigation was completed before the City's removal of the OIG's direct access to records, files, and communications on February 6, 2026.

Executive Summary

The OIG's investigation began in 2025. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint alleging the Mayor's Office used "permission leave" time for employees when separating from City employment, which is not offered to the majority of City of Baltimore (City) employees at separation from City employment. The OIG expanded the investigation to include a review of all City agencies' use of permission leave for employees at the time of separation since January 2024. Permission leave is associated with administrative leave codes for the Office of the Labor Commissioner (OLC). The City's response defines administrative leave as employer-authorized, temporary absence from duty, without loss of pay and without charge to an employee's accrued leave.

The investigation substantiated the complaint that five employees from Mayoral Offices received permission leave at the time of their departure. Three of these employees received extensive permission leave, including one employee who had only been employed with the City for six months at the time of their separation. In total, these Mayoral Office employees remained on the City's payroll and were paid approximately \$147,264.90 for 276 workdays while on permission leave. Additionally, some employees appeared to remain on City payroll past their last day of actual work. Workday records and evidence reviewed indicate a City Administrator Office Employee (CAO Employee) and an employee within the Mayor's Office (MO Employee 6) were collectively paid \$53,007.54 after either their reported last day of work or their separation notice. Permission leave requests are submitted to the OLC. The OLC permission leave list did not include the CAO Employee and MO Employee 6.

The investigation also revealed two agency directors received permission leave. One Agency Director received permission leave at the time of their departure, and another Agency Director received permission leave but is still an active employee. These Agency Directors were paid \$35,668.35 for 42 workdays.

The OIG expanded its review to include other City agencies. Since January 2024, there were 8 City employees from other City agencies that received permission leave when ending City employment and were paid an approximate total of \$76,615.07 for 229 workdays. The amount of total permission leave and "extended" days totaled \$312,555.86 that was paid to employees.

Most frontline labor employees in City agencies do not receive a separation agreement with permission leave or an extended separation at the time of their separation from City employment. The OIG strongly recommends the City develop an equitable policy for the overall use and process of permission leave and a policy for separation agreements. While the OIG acknowledges the City has non-civil service and civil service classifications, City workers still have an expectation that all employees will receive equitable treatment when separating from the City, so separation agreements of this kind could lead to a perception of disparate treatment.

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

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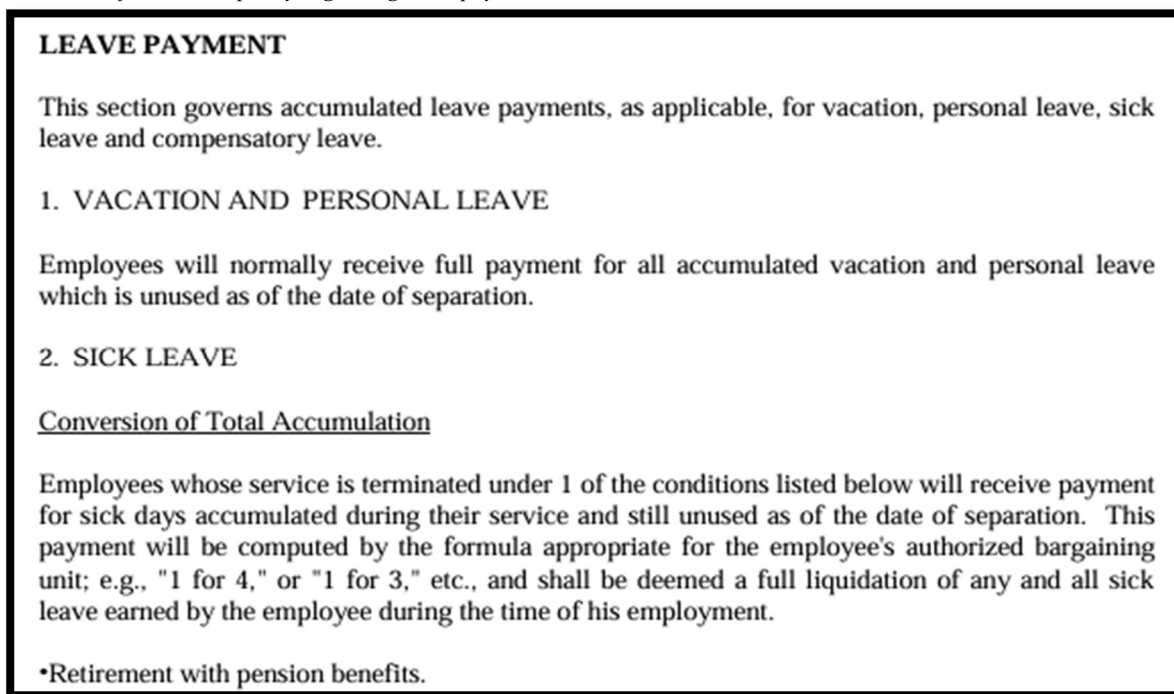
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Background

Permission leave is not accrued by an employee but is a type of administrative leave authorized during specific circumstances such as inclement weather, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other events. On October 13, 2020, the Office of the Labor Commissioner (OLC) disseminated a coding matrix for the use of permission leave, which included code 161, Termination/Separation Agreements. The CAO response to this report clarified that the City's Office of the Labor Commissioner (OLC) does not utilize the term "permission leave" any longer and it is referred to as Administrative Leave. The CAO defined administrative leave as "employer-authorized, temporary absence from duty, without loss of pay and without charge to an employee's accrued leave." The Workday time records reviewed for this investigation continued to list the employees' leave time in this report as "permission leave." Most importantly, the employees' paychecks code the leave payment as "permission time." Due to the City's continued use of "permission leave" and "permission time" in Workday and on official employee pay records, this report will continue to refer to the leave as permission leave.

The City's Administrative Manual (AM) Policy 205-7 *Separation & Payment at Termination* governs employees who separate from the City in good standing and governs the use of compensatory time at separation. Per the policy, employees will normally receive full payment for all accumulated vacation and personal leave which is unused as of the date of separation. For sick leave, employees who are retiring with pension benefits or without benefits after completing 20 years of service, will receive a sick leave payout computed with a formula of "1 for 4" or "1 for 3" (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Portion of AM-205-7 policy regarding leave payment



•Termination of service without pension benefits after completion of 20 or more years of service.

The Managerial and Professional Society of Baltimore, Inc's (MAPS) memorandum of understanding with the City also states that employees who are pensioned or who elect to terminate their service without pension and have completed at least 20 years of services, shall be entitled to one day's pay for each three days of unused sick leave.¹

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OIG INVESTIGATION

Prior Investigation

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During Case #21-0001-I, the Labor Commissioner informed the OIG that although the City did not have an official permission leave policy, permission leave is mentioned in several City policies. The OLC explained that permission leave requests are submitted to their office. The investigation confirmed the City did not have a policy governing the use of permission leave. Additionally, the OIG noted that the City does not appear to have a policy regarding the usage of separation agreements, with or without cause. With no clear policies on the matter, BCIT was told to apply agency discretion. The investigation found such discretion might result in the use of City funds for reasons that could be perceived as inequitable or wasteful.

The former City Solicitor [responded to the report](#) and wrote that because the portion of the City’s Administrative Manual referenced is the province of the DHR, the report was forwarded to the DHR Director to consider what, if any, revisions or supplementation would be appropriate.

After the OIG’s report, the City established a new policy for a severance pay program, [AM 205-7-1 Severance Pay, in December 2021](#). The policy explains the purpose of a severance pay program is to provide equitable compensation to certain executive-level employees who are at-will² and not in the Civil Service. The severance pay program applies to non-civil service employees who fall under the direction and authority of the Mayor in the capacity of a Bureau Head or above who are separating from City service for any reason that is not misconduct.³ The amount an executive-level employee would receive is based on their tenure (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Image of Pay Schedule from Severance Pay Policy

Severance Pay Schedule	
Employee Tenure	Paid Working Days
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Severance pay is contingent on the employee signing a severance agreement and waiving all claims against the City relating to separation of employment with exception of unemployment and worker’s compensation laws. The OIG notes that since the publication of this report, this policy was not included in the administrative manual version that was included the City of Baltimore’s [Law Library website](#). It is not clear if the Severance Pay policy is still an active policy. The administrative manual does not contain a policy regarding permission leave use.

² According to the State of Maryland’s Department of Labor, Maryland is an at-will employment state, meaning employees work “at the will” of their employer. According to DOL’s website, notwithstanding certain exceptions, this means that in the absence of an express contract, agreement, or policy, an employee may be fired for almost any reason – whether fair or not – or for no reason at all.

³ Within the policy, misconduct is defined as nonfeasance, misfeasance, or malfeasance.

Mayoral Office & Agency Directors Permission Leave & Separation Costs

The investigation found five Mayor’s Office employees received permission leave prior to their separation of employment. These employees stayed on the City’s payroll and remained active employees in Workday, continuing to accrue leave and maintain health insurance and other City benefits. After their separation, these employees were eligible to receive their vacation and sick leave payouts per the City’s separation policy.

The OIG was informed that in some cases, employees were presented with a separation agreement that included permission leave. During Case #21-0001-I, the Law Department explained to the OIG that the primary purpose of a separation agreement is to ensure the employee who signs the agreement will not sue the City for alleged wrongful termination.

The OLC advised that their approval in these matters is an administrative function of the Mayor and noted separation agreements may be offered before their approval is requested.⁴ DHR informed the OIG there is not a permission leave policy for the City. The OLC stated they would be in favor of collaborating with DHR to create a formal permission leave policy.

The OIG reviewed the Mayor’s Office’s use of permission leave and separation pay. Notably, a Mayor’s Office Employee (MO Employee 1) was employed with the Mayor’s Office for six months when their departure was announced. The MO Employee 1 remained on City payroll for approximately four months after the departure and was paid a total \$62,309.83. The MO Employee 1 then received a vacation and sick leave payout of \$8,307.96.

Table 1 below shows the Mayor’s Office employees that were paid an approximate total of \$147,264.90 while on permission leave.

Table 1: Permission Leave (PL) Costs in 2025

Job Title	Tenure	# of Days Paid After Separation	Excess PERM L Payout Amount⁵
MO Employee 1	6 months	69 PERM L workdays + 18 regular workdays after departure* + 2 holidays^	\$47,770.77 (PERM L) + \$13,153.26 (regular) + \$1,385.80 (holiday)
MO Employee 2	2 years	13 PERM L workdays	\$4,349.52 (PERM L)
MO Employee 3	2 years, 9 months	82 PERM L workdays + 4 Holidays	\$48,730.54 (PERM L) + \$2,379.08 (Holiday)
MO Employee 4	7 months	19 PERM L workdays	\$7,381.16 (PERM L)
MO Employee 5	4 years, 2 months	67 PERM L Workdays + 2 Holidays	\$21,473.25 (PERM L) + \$641.52 (Holiday)
	Total	276 Days	\$147,264.90

*Permission Leave in this table also includes time that was entered as “regular” work hours after the departures were announced before separation agreements were finalized.

^The holidays paid for in this table occurred during the permission leave period.

⁴ According to the City Charter, the Mayor appoints the Labor Commissioner, and the City’s human resource platform, Workday, shows the Labor Commissioner’s supervisory report is within the CAO.

⁵ This amount is the gross amount before payroll deductions.

The OLC provided a list of approved permission leave for employees, which shows the OLC approved permission leave requests for all the employees with the exception of the MO Employee 2 who was not on the OLC approved permission leave list.

The City’s response clarified that the two employees that received permission leave were not employees of the Mayor’s Office and their costs should be attributed to their respective agencies. The OIG reviewed the list and separated two agency directors from Mayor’s Office employees. For further clarification, the City’s human capital and timekeeping system Workday shows that no one reports to the Mayor for time approvals. Agency Directors report to the Deputy Mayors, Chief of Staff or the City Administrator Office (CAO). Figure 3 below provides an example of the reporting structure.

Figure 3: Organizational Chart examples

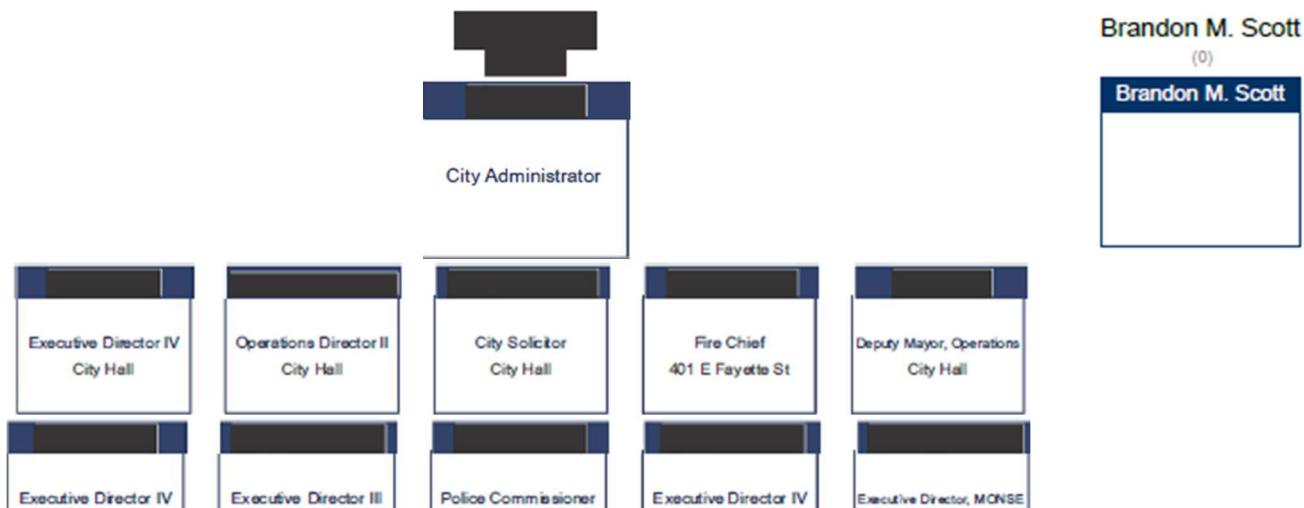


Table 2 below shows the two Agency Directors that have also received permission leave totaling \$35,668.35.

Table 2: Agency Director Permission Leave Costs in 2025 & 2026

Job Title	Tenure	# of Days Paid	Excess PERM L Payout Amount ⁶
Agency Director 1	12 years	16 PERM L Workdays	\$14,130.58 (PERM L)
Agency Director 2	2 years	26 PERM L Workdays	\$21,537.77 (PERM L)
Total		42 Days	\$35,668.35

Agency Director 1 received the permission leave during their separation from the City. The OIG learned that Agency Director 2 was approved for 240 hours of administrative leave and was scheduled to be on “permission leave”.⁷ A Deputy Mayor initially requested the 240 hours be added to Agency Director 2’s compensatory time bank. Compensatory time is provided for overtime hours worked. The CAO replied that the Agency Director 2’s request came to them and discussed providing administrative leave to the Agency Director 2 with the Mayor. The CAO noted a justification for the use of permission leave that the Agency Director 2 does not log compensatory hours. However, a review of Workday showed that the Agency Director 2 had previously submitted time requests for compensatory time and used 18 days of compensatory leave in June 2025. The OIG also found that the Agency Director 2 had submitted compensatory time requests in Workday, but they did not add time to their compensatory leave bank because they did not submit regular work hours on their timesheet for approval.

⁶ This amount is the gross amount before payroll deductions.

⁷ According to Workday records, the Agency Director 2 used 26 workdays during this timeframe.

In the City’s response to this report, the CAO stated that Agency Director 2 also was part of the Citywide Employee recognition Program which provides leave for exceptional City service. The City’s Administrative Manual for the Employee Recognition Program states employees are eligible for 5 or 3 days of leave depending on which award received, meaning at least 21 permission leave days were outside the recognition award.

The OIG notes that the City’s [payroll](#) and [overtime](#) policies were created in 1989 and 1990, respectively. Due to the City’s change in payroll systems and processes, the OIG recommends that these policies be reviewed for potential updates. AM Policy 205-2-2 Part 3 [Overtime Work: Exempt Classes](#) explains that employees will receive compensatory leave in an amount equal to the overtime recorded. City agencies have practiced that employees and their approving supervisors are responsible for submitting an accurate record of time worked. Providing compensatory time without recorded documentation of the hours worked could create a perception of inequity and potentially create future instances when employees receive compensatory time without proper documentation.

Review of Other City Agencies & Permission Leave

The OLC provided the approved permission leave list for 21 other City employees since January 2024. Of the 21 employees, 11 received permission leave coded in Workday as “termination/separation agreement.” Two employees’ permission leave did not coincide with their separation. They did not separate from the City until months after the permission leave ended and had numerous “leave without pay” entries leading up to their separation date. Another employee received leave pending their civil service pre-termination conference. The table below includes the remaining 8 employees in their respective agencies who received permission leave that appeared to directly coincide with their separation from the City (Table 3). These employees were paid an approximate total of \$76,615.07 while on permission leave.

Table 3: Employee permission leave at Separation from other City agencies since January 2024

Department/ Agency	Tenure	# of Days Paid	Excess PERM L Payout Amount
Department of General Services	2 years, 11 months	10 PERM L	\$5,266.02
Office of the Comptroller	7 years	73 PERM L + 3 Holiday	\$19,612.02
Housing and Community Development	5 years, 1 month	7 PERM L	\$4,492.65
State’s Attorney Office	1 year, 8 months	11 PERM L+ 3 Holiday	\$2,641.33
Department of Human Resources	11 years	24 PERM L+ 1 Holiday	\$14,625.57
Department of Audits	5 months	12 PERM L+ 1 Holiday	\$3,541.23
Law Department	17 years	40 PERM L + 3 Holiday	\$6,068.60
State’s Attorney Office	7 years, 8 months	39 PERM L + 2 Holiday	\$20,367.65
	Total	229 Days	\$76,615.07

Review of “Extended” Separations

In 2025, the CAO announced the departure of an employee in their office (CAO Employee). The CAO Employee’s out-of-office email message confirmed their departure date. The investigation did not find evidence that the CAO Employee completed work on the City network after their departure date.

The CAO’s Office confirmed with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) that the CAO Employee was to stay in “pay status”. The CAO’s Office later wrote that they would be extending the CAO Employee’s permission leave and asked for the remaining compensatory hours to be exhausted as well. However, Workday time entries show permission leave was not entered for the CAO Employee. The CAO Employee work hours were entered as “regular” work hours. The OIG learned that the CAO Employee was allowed to be on the City’s payroll for 49 workdays and 1 holiday after their departure, for a total gross of \$43,864.16. After their employment in Workday ended, the CAO Employee received a paycheck for severance, vacation, and sick leave payout in the gross amount of \$23,068.97.

Additionally, an employee within the Mayor’s Office (MO Employee 6), appeared to receive an “extended” separation date. In 2025, a Special Assistant to a Mayor’s Office Executive wrote an email titled “Extension”, stating “Per [Mayor’s Office Executive name removed], please extend [MO Employee 6’s name removed] PIN for another 30 days; and send [them] written notification reflecting this change”.

The Mayor’s Executive’s signature appears on the termination letter which notified MO Employee 6 of their termination but provided an extended termination date with the direction to “transition your work to your supervisor and take the time to look for other job opportunities until [termination date removed].” A review of the MO Employee 6’s correspondence showed they only sent one message after the termination letter. Additionally, Workday records indicated no time entries for MO Employee 6 for the last two weeks of their employment. The OIG found the MO Employee 6 received payment for 25 workdays before their separation date, totaling a gross payment of \$9,143.38. The MO Employee 6 received their vacation payout of \$6,858.03 after their separation.

The OLC confirmed they did not receive permission leave requests for the CAO Employee and the MO Employee 6. Table 4 below shows the approximate payments for the CAO Employee and MO Employee 6 that were made as regular work hours.

Table 4: “Extended” Separation Costs⁸

Job Title	Employment Tenure	# of Days Paid	Gross Payslip Amount
CAO Employee	4 years	49 Regular Workdays + 1 Holiday	\$43,864.16
MO Employee 6	2 years, 8 months	25 Workdays	\$9,143.38
	Total	75 Days	\$53,007.54

⁸ Costs are the gross amounts before payroll deductions.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

The investigation revealed that Employees who separated from the City but provided permission leave remained active in Workday, continuing to be paid, receiving City health benefits, and accruing leave. Additionally, after their separation date in Workday, some could be eligible to receive any severance pay and unused leave payouts that they are due.

The investigation found that, in 2025, the Mayor's Office paid an approximate \$147,264.90 to five employees for 276 workdays. Moreover, the OIG found the MO Employee 6 and CAO Employee were not listed on the OLC's approved permission leave list but appeared to have received "extended" separations, which amounted to a total gross payment of \$53,007.54. The "extended" separations were not addressed in the City's response to this report.

The investigation also found two Agency Directors were paid \$35,668.35 for 42 workdays. Across other City agencies since January 2024, the OIG found eight other employees that received \$76,615.07 collectively.

The amount of total permission leave and "extended" days totaled \$312,555.86 that was paid to employees.

While case #21-0001-I revealed City agencies have discretion regarding separation agreements, such discretion could result in the use of City funds for reasons that could be perceived as inequitable or wasteful. Many frontline employees typically would not receive a separation agreement or an extended separation upon their departure from City employment. While the OIG acknowledges the City has non-civil service and civil service classifications, City workers still have an expectation that all employees will receive equitable treatment when separating from the City, so separation agreements of this kind could lead to a perception of disparate treatment.

The OIG notes that the City established the Severance Pay policy after the prior Case #21-0001-I, to provide equitable compensation to certain executive-level employees. However, one employee referenced in this report benefited from the severance pay and received an extended separation date. The OIG strongly recommends the City develop a permission leave or administrative leave policy for the overall use and process of permission/administrative leave, and a separation policy for separation agreements when an employee receives notice of separation.

Sincerely,

Isabel Mercedes Cumming
Inspector General

CC: Hon. Brandon M. Scott, Mayor of Baltimore City
Hon. Zeke Cohen, Baltimore City Council President
Hon. Bill Henry, Baltimore City Comptroller
Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council
Hon. Ebony Thompson, Baltimore City Solicitor

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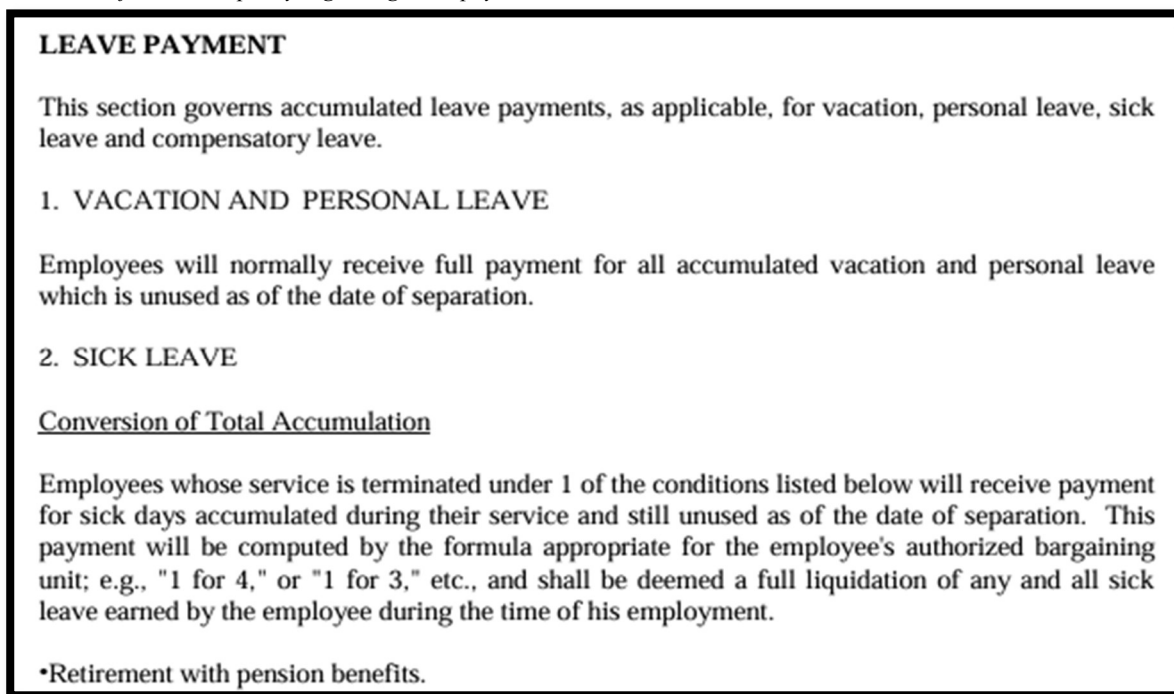
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The OIG was informed that in some cases, employees were presented with a separation agreement that included permission leave. During Case #21-0001-I, the Law Department explained to the OIG that the primary purpose of a separation agreement is to ensure the employee who signs the agreement will not sue the City for alleged wrongful termination.

The OLC advised that their approval in these matters is an administrative function of the Mayor and noted separation agreements may be offered before their approval is requested.⁴ DHR informed the OIG there is not a permission leave policy for the City. The OLC stated they would be in favor of collaborating with DHR to create a formal permission leave policy.

The OIG reviewed the Mayor’s Office’s use of permission leave and separation pay. Notably, a Mayor’s Office Employee (MO Employee 1) was employed with the Mayor’s Office for six months when their departure was announced. The MO Employee 1 remained on City payroll for approximately four months after the departure and was paid a total \$62,309.83. The MO Employee 1 then received a vacation and sick leave payout of \$8,307.96.

Table 1 below shows the Mayor’s Office employees that were paid an approximate total of \$147,264.90 while on permission leave.

Table 1: Permission Leave (PL) Costs in 2025

Job Title	Tenure	# of Days Paid After Separation	Excess PERM L Payout Amount⁵
MO Employee 1	6 months	69 PERM L workdays + 18 regular workdays after departure* + 2 holidays^	\$47,770.77 (PERM L) + \$13,153.26 (regular) + \$1,385.80 (holiday)
MO Employee 2	2 years	13 PERM L workdays	\$4,349.52 (PERM L)
MO Employee 3	2 years, 9 months	82 PERM L workdays + 4 Holidays	\$48,730.54 (PERM L) + \$2,379.08 (Holiday)
MO Employee 4	7 months	19 PERM L workdays	\$7,381.16 (PERM L)
MO Employee 5	4 years, 2 months	67 PERM L Workdays + 2 Holidays	\$21,473.25 (PERM L) + \$641.52 (Holiday)
	Total	276 Days	\$147,264.90

*Permission Leave in this table also includes time that was entered as “regular” work hours after the departures were announced before separation agreements were finalized.

^The holidays paid for in this table occurred during the permission leave period.

⁴ According to the City Charter, the Mayor appoints the Labor Commissioner, and the City’s human resource platform, Workday, shows the Labor Commissioner’s supervisory report is within the CAO.

⁵ This amount is the gross amount before payroll deductions.

The OLC provided a list of approved permission leave for employees, which shows the OLC approved permission leave requests for all the employees with the exception of the MO Employee 2 who was not on the OLC approved permission leave list.

The City’s response clarified that the two employees that received permission leave were not employees of the Mayor’s Office and their costs should be attributed to their respective agencies. The OIG reviewed the list and separated two agency directors from Mayor’s Office employees. For further clarification, the City’s human capital and timekeeping system Workday shows that no one reports to the Mayor for time approvals. Agency Directors report to the Deputy Mayors, Chief of Staff or the City Administrator Office (CAO). Figure 3 below provides an example of the reporting structure.

Figure 3: Organizational Chart examples

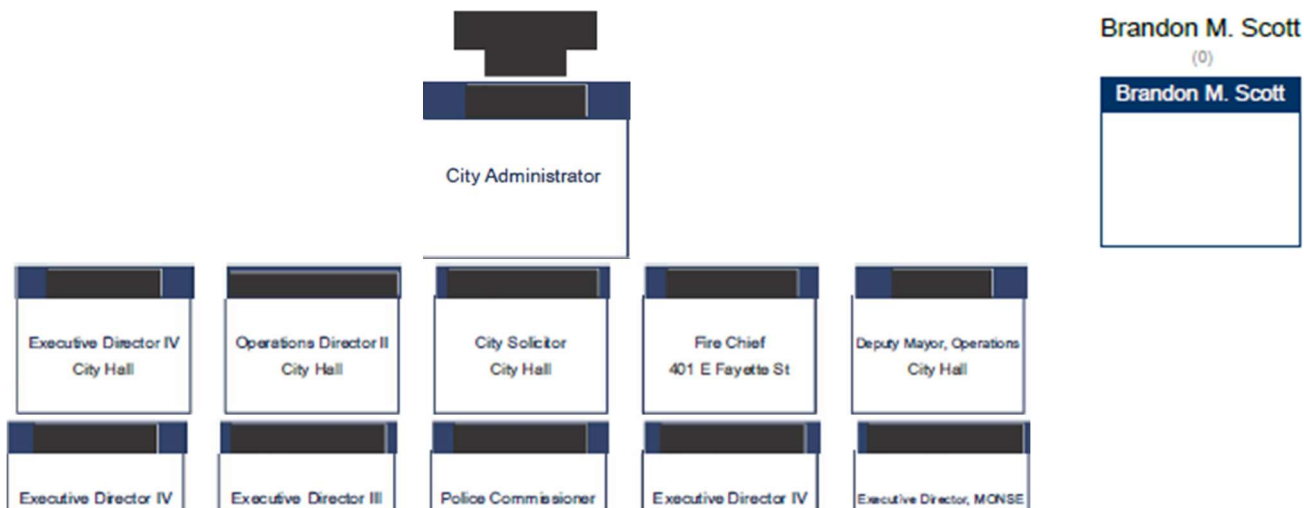


Table 2 below shows the two Agency Directors that have also received permission leave totaling \$35,668.35.

Table 2: Agency Director Permission Leave Costs in 2025 & 2026

Job Title	Tenure	# of Days Paid	Excess PERM L Payout Amount ⁶
Agency Director 1	12 years	16 PERM L Workdays	\$14,130.58 (PERM L)
Agency Director 2	2 years	26 PERM L Workdays	\$21,537.77 (PERM L)
Total		42 Days	\$35,668.35

Agency Director 1 received the permission leave during their separation from the City. The OIG learned that Agency Director 2 was approved for 240 hours of administrative leave and was scheduled to be on “permission leave”.⁷ A Deputy Mayor initially requested the 240 hours be added to Agency Director 2’s compensatory time bank. Compensatory time is provided for overtime hours worked. The CAO replied that the Agency Director 2’s request came to them and discussed providing administrative leave to the Agency Director 2 with the Mayor. The CAO noted a justification for the use of permission leave that the Agency Director 2 does not log compensatory hours. However, a review of Workday showed that the Agency Director 2 had previously submitted time requests for compensatory time and used 18 days of compensatory leave in June 2025. The OIG also found that the Agency Director 2 had submitted compensatory time requests in Workday, but they did not add time to their compensatory leave bank because they did not submit regular work hours on their timesheet for approval.

⁶ This amount is the gross amount before payroll deductions.

⁷ According to Workday records, the Agency Director 2 used 26 workdays during this timeframe.

In the City’s response to this report, the CAO stated that Agency Director 2 also was part of the Citywide Employee recognition Program which provides leave for exceptional City service. The City’s Administrative Manual for the Employee Recognition Program states employees are eligible for 5 or 3 days of leave depending on which award received, meaning at least 21 permission leave days were outside the recognition award.

The OIG notes that the City’s [payroll](#) and [overtime](#) policies were created in 1989 and 1990, respectively. Due to the City’s change in payroll systems and processes, the OIG recommends that these policies be reviewed for potential updates. AM Policy 205-2-2 Part 3 [Overtime Work: Exempt Classes](#) explains that employees will receive compensatory leave in an amount equal to the overtime recorded. City agencies have practiced that employees and their approving supervisors are responsible for submitting an accurate record of time worked. Providing compensatory time without recorded documentation of the hours worked could create a perception of inequity and potentially create future instances when employees receive compensatory time without proper documentation.

Review of Other City Agencies & Permission Leave

The OLC provided the approved permission leave list for 21 other City employees since January 2024. Of the 21 employees, 11 received permission leave coded in Workday as “termination/separation agreement.” Two employees’ permission leave did not coincide with their separation. They did not separate from the City until months after the permission leave ended and had numerous “leave without pay” entries leading up to their separation date. Another employee received leave pending their civil service pre-termination conference. The table below includes the remaining 8 employees in their respective agencies who received permission leave that appeared to directly coincide with their separation from the City (Table 3). These employees were paid an approximate total of \$76,615.07 while on permission leave.

Table 3: Employee permission leave at Separation from other City agencies since January 2024

Department/ Agency	Tenure	# of Days Paid	Excess PERM L Payout Amount
Department of General Services	2 years, 11 months	10 PERM L	\$5,266.02
Office of the Comptroller	7 years	73 PERM L + 3 Holiday	\$19,612.02
Housing and Community Development	5 years, 1 month	7 PERM L	\$4,492.65
State’s Attorney Office	1 year, 8 months	11 PERM L+ 3 Holiday	\$2,641.33
Department of Human Resources	11 years	24 PERM L+ 1 Holiday	\$14,625.57
Department of Audits	5 months	12 PERM L+ 1 Holiday	\$3,541.23
Law Department	17 years	40 PERM L + 3 Holiday	\$6,068.60
State’s Attorney Office	7 years, 8 months	39 PERM L + 2 Holiday	\$20,367.65
	Total	229 Days	\$76,615.07

Review of “Extended” Separations

In 2025, the CAO announced the departure of an employee in their office (CAO Employee). The CAO Employee’s out-of-office email message confirmed their departure date. The investigation did not find evidence that the CAO Employee completed work on the City network after their departure date.

The CAO’s Office confirmed with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) that the CAO Employee was to stay in “pay status”. The CAO’s Office later wrote that they would be extending the CAO Employee’s permission leave and asked for the remaining compensatory hours to be exhausted as well. However, Workday time entries show permission leave was not entered for the CAO Employee. The CAO Employee work hours were entered as “regular” work hours. The OIG learned that the CAO Employee was allowed to be on the City’s payroll for 49 workdays and 1 holiday after their departure, for a total gross of \$43,864.16. After their employment in Workday ended, the CAO Employee received a paycheck for severance, vacation, and sick leave payout in the gross amount of \$23,068.97.

Additionally, an employee within the Mayor’s Office (MO Employee 6), appeared to receive an “extended” separation date. In 2025, a Special Assistant to a Mayor’s Office Executive wrote an email titled “Extension”, stating “Per [Mayor’s Office Executive name removed], please extend [MO Employee 6’s name removed] PIN for another 30 days; and send [them] written notification reflecting this change”.

The Mayor’s Executive’s signature appears on the termination letter which notified MO Employee 6 of their termination but provided an extended termination date with the direction to “transition your work to your supervisor and take the time to look for other job opportunities until [termination date removed].” A review of the MO Employee 6’s correspondence showed they only sent one message after the termination letter. Additionally, Workday records indicated no time entries for MO Employee 6 for the last two weeks of their employment. The OIG found the MO Employee 6 received payment for 25 workdays before their separation date, totaling a gross payment of \$9,143.38. The MO Employee 6 received their vacation payout of \$6,858.03 after their separation.

The OLC confirmed they did not receive permission leave requests for the CAO Employee and the MO Employee 6. Table 4 below shows the approximate payments for the CAO Employee and MO Employee 6 that were made as regular work hours.

Table 4: “Extended” Separation Costs⁸

Job Title	Employment Tenure	# of Days Paid	Gross Payslip Amount
CAO Employee	4 years	49 Regular Workdays + 1 Holiday	\$43,864.16
MO Employee 6	2 years, 8 months	25 Workdays	\$9,143.38
	Total	75 Days	\$53,007.54

⁸ Costs are the gross amounts before payroll deductions.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

The investigation revealed that Employees who separated from the City but provided permission leave remained active in Workday, continuing to be paid, receiving City health benefits, and accruing leave. Additionally, after their separation date in Workday, some could be eligible to receive any severance pay and unused leave payouts that they are due.

The investigation found that, in 2025, the Mayor's Office paid an approximate \$147,264.90 to five employees for 276 workdays. Moreover, the OIG found the MO Employee 6 and CAO Employee were not listed on the OLC's approved permission leave list but appeared to have received "extended" separations, which amounted to a total gross payment of \$53,007.54. The "extended" separations were not addressed in the City's response to this report.

The investigation also found two Agency Directors were paid \$35,668.35 for 42 workdays. Across other City agencies since January 2024, the OIG found eight other employees that received \$76,615.07 collectively.

The amount of total permission leave and "extended" days totaled \$312,555.86 that was paid to employees.

While case #21-0001-I revealed City agencies have discretion regarding separation agreements, such discretion could result in the use of City funds for reasons that could be perceived as inequitable or wasteful. Many frontline employees typically would not receive a separation agreement or an extended separation upon their departure from City employment. While the OIG acknowledges the City has non-civil service and civil service classifications, City workers still have an expectation that all employees will receive equitable treatment when separating from the City, so separation agreements of this kind could lead to a perception of disparate treatment.

The OIG notes that the City established the Severance Pay policy after the prior Case #21-0001-I, to provide equitable compensation to certain executive-level employees. However, one employee referenced in this report benefited from the severance pay and received an extended separation date. The OIG strongly recommends the City develop a permission leave or administrative leave policy for the overall use and process of permission/administrative leave, and a separation policy for separation agreements when an employee receives notice of separation.

Sincerely,

Isabel Mercedes Cumming
Inspector General

CC: Hon. Brandon M. Scott, Mayor of Baltimore City
Hon. Zeke Cohen, Baltimore City Council President
Hon. Bill Henry, Baltimore City Comptroller
Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council
Hon. Ebony Thompson, Baltimore City Solicitor