



**Office of the Internal Auditor
City of Providence**

August 28, 2026

Tina Mastroianni
City Clerk
Providence City Hall
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Madam Clerk,

I respectfully submit the first annual report on behalf of the Office of the Internal Auditor for SpeakUpPVD!, the city's Whistleblower hotline. This report highlights each complaint reported on the hotline via the telephone or website. Although there were not many reports, the public should be comfortable to know that their voices are heard – anonymously, and this office does investigate when necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina M. Costa".

Gina M. Costa
Internal Auditor

Enc.

The Office of the Internal Auditor started the city’s first whistleblower hotline - “SpeakUp!PVD” - in January 2025.

Each person who files a complaint is assigned a case name and keeps that name until the report is closed, unless they continue to use it for ongoing issues. This maintains anonymity for the complaints and allows them to speak freely, if they choose. The office is completely unaware of the person making the complaints no matter if it is submitted via website or phone.

As the office concludes its first year implementing and utilizing a whistleblower hotline, it is still making improvements to reporting, while also managing budget season demands and other routine functions.

This report will be unique and include a brief description of all nineteen complaints. Going forward, only those complaints that are investigated will be reported individually. The city council will receive an annual update of all complaints.

There were nineteen (19) reports filed in 2025. Four of the nineteen were substantive and resulted in an investigation.

Please see Table 1 below for a summary of all complaints. Following that, you will see a summary of each individual case filed between January – December 2025.

Table 1. Summary of SpeakUp!PVD Hotline Complaints from January – December 2025

STATUS	QUANTITY
Open (throughout reporting period)	19
Substantive complaints	13
Converted to investigation	4
Closed (referred to another department)	10
Closed due to insufficient information or no basis for opening investigation	5
Open at the end of reporting period	0

Gold Piano

Date	January 29, 2025
Summary of Complaint	A retired, divorced class B police officer, covering an ex-spouse's medical insurance, remarried and never removed the ex-spouse from medical coverage.
Finding	Accurate
Cost to City	\$831.42; The ex-spouse did not incur any medical cost to the retiree's insurance from the date of marriage to the time of discovery and cancellation. (Eighteen months)
Outcomes	• The City will create a policy outlining the responsibilities of the retirees regarding proper notification to the benefits department and retirement of life changing events. • Benefits will be seeking reimbursement from the retiree. • Benefits will be performing a dependent verification for retirees • New policy being created to address this issue
Report Status	This report is closed

Sapphire Rabbit

Date	January 29, 2025
Summary of Complaint	City vehicles were being used to pick up trash at a private condo building on Angell Street.
Finding	Unable to determine
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	The complainant did not respond to questions from the office regarding additional information about when this occurred. The complaint was forwarded to the Department of Public Works (DPW). DPW reinforced that buildings with six plus (6+) residential units provide private trash removal.
Report Status	This report is closed

Taupe Sun

Date	February 18, 2025
Summary of Complaint	A Department Director is abusing the city vehicle policy by traveling with a child in the car (car seat sighted in vehicle), frequent bars with the city vehicle, improper markings, and has flashing lights.
Finding	Mostly Accurate
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	The Office of the Internal Auditor (OIA) monitored Verizon Connect Reveal, the city's GPS tracking. The vehicle was found to drop off at a day care in the morning, and the vehicle is not marked in accordance with Code of Ordinances Sec. 15-1 – City vehicles to carry name of city. The reports of flashing lights are legitimate, according to the Public Property Director and reports of taking the vehicle to bars could not be determined but was forwarded to Office of People & Culture and Public Property, who oversees fleet maintenance.
Report Status	This report is closed

Sapphire Anchor

Date	March 20, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Department Director was involved in an accident with a city vehicle.
Finding	This was accurate
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	Proper procedures were followed for reporting accidents. This accident did not occur during normal working hours, but this Director does have business beyond the normal work schedule.
Report Status	This report is closed

Azure Moon

Date	March 21, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Complainant claims that a Deputy Director is rarely in the office, claims to work remote, but is very difficult to reach.
Finding	This was reported to Office of People and Culture/Human Resources
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Indigo Heptagon

Date	March 27, 2025
Summary of Complaint	From 2020-2021 Aventure Academy ("Knight Academy") was a night school for students to make up credits. It was going to pay teachers \$100/hr despite the Collective Bargaining Agreement stating all afterschool would pay \$40/hr
Finding	All employees named in the complaint earned wages properly.
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	No findings.
Report Status	This report is closed

Brass Windmill

Date	March 27, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Training session for harassment and discrimination did not present a fair and safe workplace according to the complainant.
Finding	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Unknown
Report Status	This report is closed

Crimson Vase

Date	April 2, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Abuse of time. A city employee did not discharge time or disclose that they were working from home.
Finding	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Unknown
Report Status	This report is closed

Magenta Seahorse

Date	April 9, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Individual voiced dissatisfaction about being asked to make donations to the Recreation Department. Displeased that only half goes to the Recreation Center of choice and mandating employees to raise money is absurd since there is a budget in place.
Finding	Small business owner voicing opinion
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	No action taken
Report Status	This report is closed

Platinum Tram

Date	April 11, 2025
Summary of Complaint	A report filed by the Office of the Internal Auditor regarding overtime has recommendations to recoup overtime funds from those who should not have earned it. This complainant is concerned that the reputation of employees are being harmed because they have no control over updating ordinances.
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	No action taken
Report Status	This report is closed

Onyx Lion (1)

Date	May 8, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Complaints about the behavior of a director.
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Onyx Hexagon

Date	May 8, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Complaints about the behavior of a director.
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Platinum Hectogon

Date	May 8, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Support of an employee who was separated from City Services
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Lilac Crescent

Date	May 8, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Support of an employee who was separated from City Services
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Copper Candle

Date	May 9, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Support of an employee who was separated from City Services
Finding	Commentary.
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Platinum Octagon

Date	May 9, 2025
Summary of Complaint	Support of an employee who was separated from City Services
Finding	Commentary.
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	Reported to Office of People & Culture (Human Resources)
Report Status	This report is closed

Gold Cedar

Date	May 20, 2025
Summary of Complaint	The complainant voices concern about the school department wasting money by moving the Information Technology Department to a space that is too small
Finding	Commentary
Cost to City	Unknown
Outcomes	The city currently has no oversight of school district's budget
Report Status	This report is closed

Violet Maple

Date	July 25, 2025
Summary of Complaint	The complainant claims a director was reimbursed \$3,000.00 for a seminar that no one attended.
Finding	The Director was reimbursed for the seminar and three employees did attend. The employees were not from the Director's department
Cost to City	\$0.00
Outcomes	Purchase orders should be obtained, when possible, for transparency.
Report Status	This report is closed

Onyx Lion (2)

Date	November 26, 2025
Summary of Complaint	The complainant claims a director attended the Osborne Classic Golf Tournament.
Finding	The Director sent city youth to the tournament at a cost of \$10,000.00. The Jeffrey Osborne Foundation did not receive the funds until July 2026.
Cost to City	\$0.00. The Administration claimed it was an allowable expense, they were confirming payment.
Outcomes	Purchase orders should be obtained prior to the event to ensure that duplicate payments do not occur.
Report Status	This report is closed