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### **Inspector General Releases Report on Fire Department Overtime Payments**

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (IGO) yesterday transmitted a report to the City concerning overtime and holiday premium payments to certain “exempt” members of the Chicago Fire Department (CFD).

The review had two primary findings. First, the CFD has been providing overtime, holiday premium payments, and other benefits to certain “exempt” CFD employees not guaranteed such benefits by the Local 2 Agreement. Second, the CFD has been unable to accommodate the City’s furlough program without significant overtime and holiday premium payments to these “exempt” employees.

“Exempt” employees are not included in the Chicago Fire Fighters Union Local 2 agreement. The IGO views the payment of these benefits to salaried, mostly high-ranking, supervisory and managerial employees as an unnecessary and significant drain on limited public resources. The IGO report strongly recommends these payments be discontinued.

“Our report revealed increased overtime and holiday premium costs for exempt CFD employees,” said Inspector General Joe Ferguson. “Furloughs were intended to save the City money. These payments needlessly violate the spirit of the furlough program at the time we can least afford it. Commissioner Hoff and his management team have cooperated fully for this report, and in the process, contributed greatly to the IGO’s understanding of the CFD’s use of overtime. I look forward to seeing these problems resolved by the CFD.”

The IGO focused on payments made to 7 of the 44 exempt titles in the CFD. By reviewing payments made from 2005 to 2010, the IGO found that overtime payments have dramatically risen since 2006, and remained high for the past 4 years. Moreover, the collective payment of overtime and holiday premium pay negated furlough savings for those seven exempt titles. Over the past two years, the CFD has spent more than \$335,000 on holiday and overtime spending when furloughs should have resulted in savings for these positions. More than \$146,000 of that total resulted from 21 deputy district chiefs’ (DDCs) participation in the 2009 administration of the test required for promotion to lieutenant.

The report also found that the CFD continues to pay overtime and holiday premiums, along with other cash benefits guaranteed to members covered by the Local 2 Agreement, to a significant number of “exempt” employees not entitled to such benefits under the Local 2 Agreement. Although the CFD does not authorize overtime or holiday premiums for the vast majority of its exempt titles, the department has provided these benefits to seven non-union titles – most significantly to DDCs and assistant deputy chief paramedics (ADCPs) – at its discretion and at a significant expense to City taxpayers.

The IGO released an interim report on CFD overtime spending on last year. Since the interim report’s release, CFD has improved several aspects of its overtime accounting systems to minimize clerical errors, as well in cutting back on overtime payments made to exempt employees.

The full report can be found [online](#) at the IGO website: [www.chicagoinspectorgeneral.org](http://www.chicagoinspectorgeneral.org). Follow the IGO on Twitter at [ChicagoIGO](#) for the latest information on how the IGO continues to fight waste, fraud, abuse, and inefficiency in Chicago government.

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