



## Memorandum

TO: Michael Murawski, Advocate and  
Miriam Ramos, Deputy General Counsel

FROM: Sylvia Batista, Investigator

DATE: 03/08/13

RE: K13-032 - Ricky Falls, City of Miami Beach Code Compliance Officer

---

On February 21, 2013, Ricky Falls, a part-time City of Miami Beach Code Compliance Officer, came into the COE requesting assistance with a problem that he had with one of his superiors.

Falls said that he has been in his present position since February 23, 2011. Falls said he recently heard that code compliance was hiring a full-time officer, and he wished to apply for the position. He tried numerous times to speak with Commander Hernan Cardeno, who had been brought in from the police department to replace former Director Santos. Falls explained that Director Santos was transferred to a different area because he was under investigation by the FBI. This same investigation had resulted in the arrest and termination of 4 code enforcement officers and one administrator.

Falls said that each time he tried to communicate with Commander Cardeno about the full time position, he was ignored. Falls explained that Cardeno's treatment felt like intimidation because he had helped with the FBI investigation last April. Falls said that he gave the FBI information regarding Director Santos, who had done some things with one of the people already arrested. It was evident that they were aware of this and came down hard on him during his 6-month review.

Falls said he asked for a meeting with Commander Cardeno and at that meeting he was again bombarded with criticism and negative comments about his terrible review. By then, he was certain that they knew about his involvement in the investigation. Falls explained that he did not think it would turn out like this because HR had asked employees to let them know if they had information for the FBI. Falls said that when he gave his information to the FBI, the individuals had already been arrested and terminated.

Falls provided the COE with copies of several e-mails which include the notification of the full-time position, commendations regarding Falls' work performance, a string of e-mails regarding Falls' attempts at meeting with the Commander, and Falls' performance review.

Falls was advised that the COE does not investigate personnel matters. Furthermore, the Miami-Dade County Whistleblower Protection Ordinance does not apply to the municipalities.