

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

K #:08-095 George Coppoleccia

Date Opened: 9/12/2008

Date Closed: 9/24/2008

Name of investigator: Arthur D. Skinner
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Allegation:

The Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General received an anonymous call on their fraud hotline. The Complainant stated there was a contractor for the Public Works Department by the last name of de la Portilla who is the brother of a female inspector for the Public Works Department. The female inspector is under the supervision of George Coppoleccia and Raul Cruz. The Complainant stated that George Coppoleccia (telephone number 305-375-2111) is aware of the relationship between de la Portilla and the female inspector. The Complainant questioned why these two relatives are allowed to work together in the same department.

Section 2-11.1 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, the County's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. . (g) Exploitation of official position prohibited. No person included in the terms defined in subsections (b)(1) through (6) shall use or attempt to use his official position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself or others except as may be specifically permitted by other ordinances and resolutions previously ordained or adopted or hereafter to be ordained or adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Investigation:

On September 23, 2008, Investigator Art Skinner interviewed, Miami-Dade County Public Works Department Construction Supervisor George Coppoleccia; In his

office in 111 building (305) 375-2111. George Coppoleccia was advised of the purpose of the interview, and gave the following information:

Coppoleccia stated he was aware that Mr. de la Portilla had a sister (Aimee Portilla) works for the Public Works Department. Coppoleccia stated that Aimee Portilla is not an inspector and does not work on any job that involves her brother de la Portilla. Portilla is a job estimator. She works in the field, inspecting reports of damaged sidewalks. It is her job to take measurements of damaged areas of the sidewalks. Portilla does not submit cost estimates for bids, that is done by another employee. As funding becomes available, these jobs are placed on the bid list available all qualified vendors, including her brother de la Portilla.

CONCLUSION:

The information supplied by the Complainant to the Office of the Inspector General was inaccurate. Aimee Portilla was not an inspector for the Public Works Department, but was a Job Estimator. As a Job Estimator for the Public Works Department, Portilla does not inspect any construction projects.