

OIG No. 13-0504
Gloria Velez
August 20, 2014

Office of the President Summary

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigated several complaints alleging that Gloria Velez, Senior Director for Central Office Human Resources engaged in nepotism by hiring unspecified friends and family members. Further, the OIG investigated subsequent complaints alleging that Michael Roman, the former “Domestic Partner” of Ms. Velez’s daughter, Gianelle Velez, was offered promotions and raises by Ms. Velez in exchange for providing health insurance coverage for her daughter. In addition the OIG investigated allegations that Senior Director Velez improperly removed or abetted the removal of HHC electronic business records in an attempt to conceal the relationship between Mr. Roman, her daughter, and herself.

OIG Report and Findings

The OIG reviewed HHC records, including email and electronic databases, conducted eighteen interviews, and other relevant city records.

The OIG found that Ms. Velez did not violate the HHC operating procedure on nepotism with respect to her husband, son, and daughter, Gina Velez, but did find evidence of violation of the intent of the nepotism procedure with respect to Michael Roman, the former Domestic Partner of her daughter Gianelle Velez. Velez’ actions as they relate to that daughter may have violated the NYC Charter conflict of interest provisions. Further, the OIG found that Mr. Roman’s promotions did not appear consistent with the qualifications cited in the job specifications. Ms. Velez is implicated by the OIG for having enabled improper removal of documentation by Mr. Roman relative to domestic partnership status.

The OIG overall finding is that Gloria Velez’s actions as they relate to family members and their significant others reflect poor judgment, that she placed her personal interests before the Corporation’s, and that she failed to properly execute and fulfill her responsibilities as Senior Director of Central Office-HR and HRSS.

Also, the OIG reports that Mr. Felix Redwood, an employee of Central Office and father of Gina Velez’s two children, failed to cooperate with the investigation and provided false statements by falsely asserting that Gloria Velez helped him be hired.

The OIG recommends that Gloria Velez's actions be referred to appropriate civil authorities for review, and that she should be disciplined for a pattern of misconduct. Discipline is recommended as well for Mr. Roman and Mr. Redwood.

Disposition by the Office of the President

The President's office accepts the findings of the OIG and accepts its recommendations. However, mindful of her 35 years of services, Ms. Velez was permitted to resign in lieu of the imposition of discipline. Ms. Gloria Velez retired, effective October 17, 2014. Letters of reprimand are being placed in the personnel files of Mr. Roman and Mr. Redmond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raj', is written above a horizontal line.

Ram Raju, MD
President and CEO