

SUMMARY

Metro-North Railroad Assistant Vice President Influence in the Hiring of a Relative MTA/OIG #2013-01

In June 2012, the Office of the New York State Comptroller referred to the OIG a possible conflict of interest and violation of the New York State Public Officers Law by the Metro-North Assistant Vice President (AVP), Operations Services Department.

Our investigation revealed that the AVP referred her domestic partner to a high-level Human Resources employee, but did not reveal her relationship to the applicant. The AVP further involved herself in the hiring process of her domestic partner by: 1) communicating with a lower-level Human Resources representative about the status of the hiring process, 2) causing job specifications to be changed so as to qualify another candidate in competition with her domestic partner to be hired for a different position, and 3) ultimately approving the hiring of her domestic partner. OIG found that the AVP failed to be properly recused from the hiring process and did not effectively communicate the situation to her supervisor.

Based on the results of our investigation, OIG concluded that the MNR official violated the Metro-North Operating Procedure governing employment of relatives, as well as the broader provisions of the MTA All-Agency Code of Ethics prohibiting nepotism, conflicts of interest, and violations of the public trust. Additionally, we referred this matter to the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) for possible violations of the New York State Public Officers Law.

www.jcope.ny.gov/public/2014/HerringtonPR.pdf

Press

[NY Law Journal 9/5/14 - Ex-MTA Executive Fined For Ethics Violation](#)

[NY Daily News 8/26/13 - MTA inspector general report provides new details of executive Sherry Herrington's alleged favoritism](#)