



## Northeastern Co-ops Gain Real-World Experience at the OIG



**“I believe that all organizations benefit by having a steady stream of talented young minds that bring a diversity of experience and ideas to the table.”**

**-George Xenakis, Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division Director**

Continuing with a two-decade tradition, the OIG welcomed its latest cohort of Northeastern University cooperative education students in July.

As part of the university’s co-op program, five Northeastern undergraduates are gaining hands-on work experience with the OIG this semester, assisting several divisions in investigative and operational assignments. Their tasks might include research, reviewing records, assisting with interviews, or fielding OIG hotline complaints.

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## Factfinding Mission: Using Requests for Information

Assume that your jurisdiction is looking to procure a new supply or service – perhaps one that you are unfamiliar with. Or maybe your jurisdiction has traditionally relied on one vendor to provide a certain supply or service, and you are curious about other options.

If you are procuring a supply or service that your jurisdiction hasn’t used before – or one that is particularly complicated – it may be difficult to know exactly what information and specifications to include in a solicitation.

An under-researched solicitation can confuse potential vendors and lead to responses that don’t speak to your actual needs.

In these circumstances, the OIG recommends that you issue a Request for Information, or RFI.

What is an RFI? It is a flexible tool that can help you develop the market knowledge necessary for your jurisdiction to plan the best possible solicitation,

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## A Word from Inspector General Jeffrey S. Shapiro

### Play a Role in Fighting Fraud



Good day.

If you see something, say something.

This expression is a call to individuals to report suspicious activity and reminds us that we all have a role to play in keeping our communities safe.

An unattended bag at an airport or someone attempting to access a restricted area are situations that could indicate a possible threat and should be reported to local law enforcement to investigate. We all know this!

The same is true when it comes to protecting the public's resources from fraud, waste, and abuse. Individuals should be familiar with signs of possible fraud, waste, and abuse of public assets and report such activity to the OIG's fraud hotline. Err on the side of overreporting. The OIG team is trained to appropriately review and investigate all tips that we receive, regardless of how the tip is made.

Many of the OIG's investigations originate when a person who observes possible fraudulent activity contacts us through our hotline. Cases in point: A former municipal DPW superintendent was simultaneously working full-time for the Commonwealth. A former police chief and a former parks and recreation director were selling publicly owned equipment online and pocketing the proceeds.

Other signs could be on the policy level, such as a town's failure to enact formal procedures for handling cash revenues, or a school's procurements of goods and services that are noncompliant with state law.

According to the Association of Certified Fraud Examiner's 2024 Report to the Nations, more than half of the instances of organizational fraud are due to a lack of internal controls or an override of existing controls. Almost half of fraud cases are discovered as the result of tips, which are twice as likely to come from employees who have had fraud awareness training.

The OIG offers free fraud awareness training through the OIG Academy and has two fraud hotlines. Our general hotline can be reached by calling 1-800-322-1323, emailing [IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov](mailto:IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov), or completing our online form at [www.mass.gov/OIGFightFraud](http://www.mass.gov/OIGFightFraud). Our transportation team also operates a hotline to receive tips of suspected fraud, waste, and abuse of transportation funds at 855-963-2580 or at [MassDOTFraudHotline@mass.gov](mailto:MassDOTFraudHotline@mass.gov).

You can also download our [flyer on workplace fraud](#) to post at your workplace.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of your agencies, communities, and organizations to make government work better today than it did yesterday.

Best,

Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG



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## Protect Your Community

If you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse of public funds, you can confidentially report your concerns.



Fill out our  
Fraud Reporting Form



Send us an email at  
[IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov](mailto:IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov)

Have a Question About  
Chapter 30B?



Send us an email at  
[OIGProcurementSupport@mass.gov](mailto:OIGProcurementSupport@mass.gov)

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*IG Shapiro makes a site visit to the Lindemann Building in Boston's Government Center with other members of the Asset Management Board.*

# Recent Investigations and Case Updates

**“As stewards of public resources, town leaders have a duty to properly supervise the operations and employees of their town. And town employees have a duty to perform the work that they are paid to do. In this instance, both the DPW Commission and the former DPW superintendent failed to fulfill their responsibilities to the community they serve.”**

**-IG Jeffrey Shapiro**

## OIG Calls on Town of Barre to Improve Timekeeping Controls

A recent OIG investigation found that a former superintendent of the town of Barre’s Department of Public Works, Jason Pimental, worked hundreds of hours for two state agencies during times that he was simultaneously scheduled to work his DPW job.

In a July 29 public letter to Barre’s interim town administrator, Select Board chair, and DPW Commission chair, the OIG outlined four investigative findings and made 12 recommendations to improve the town’s timekeeping and related practices.

The OIG described in the letter how the DPW Commission – an entity established by legislation in 1988 to oversee the DPW – failed to supervise Pimental’s time between 2020 and 2024. The OIG’s investigation found that Pimental worked approximately 885 hours for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) on days he was scheduled to work his regular 10-hour shift for the town, equating to approximately \$33,000 in town-paid salary for hours he was working for DFS. Then, from July to September 2024, the OIG found that Pimental worked full-time for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority on days he was scheduled to work full-time for the DPW.

Pimental did not take leave time from the town during these periods and continued to collect his town salary. Although Pimental claimed he took comp time and worked after-hours for the town to make up the lost hours, neither the town nor the DPW Commission could produce records to substantiate those claims.

The OIG also found that another employee, a former DPW administrative assistant, punched out of work early and altered her timecard on approximately 50 occasions from December 2021 to February 2024. While the administrative assistant claimed that she worked out of office on those occasions to complete her full workday, neither the town nor the DPW Commission maintained records documenting the claimed out-of-office hours. Further, neither the town nor the DPW Commission has a written policy allowing for out-of-office work.

The OIG found that the DPW Commission not only failed to adequately supervise Pimental and the former DPW administrative assistant, but also does not regularly monitor the work hours and payroll of DPW employees.

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In light of its investigative findings, the OIG made several recommendations to the town and the DPW to improve timekeeping practices, such as implementing controls to ensure that hours and leave time are properly reported; formalizing a policy for out-of-office working hours; and adopting controls to prohibit the town from processing payments for undocumented work time.

To allow the town to more effectively govern DPW employees, the OIG also recommended that the town consider proposing legislation that would eliminate the DPW Commission and bring the DPW and its superintendent under the authority of the town's Select Board or town administrator.

## Former Medfield Official Pleads Guilty to Pocketing Town Funds

In July, former Medfield Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Ryder pleaded guilty to stealing over \$100,000 in town funds through multiple schemes, including pocketing cash from park revenues and using a town business account to buy and sell items.

A Norfolk County Superior Court judge sentenced Ryder to two and a half years in a house of correction, with six months to serve and the balance suspended for three years. The judge also ordered Ryder to pay restitution to the town of Medfield and to refrain from holding a fiduciary role in any employment position while on probation.

Ryder served as Medfield's Parks and Recreation Director from 2014 to 2022, during which time he stole thousands of dollars in cash from entrance fees and concessions at Hinkley Swim Pond in Medfield. He also used a town Amazon business account to purchase thousands of dollars' worth of personal items for his side business, as well as electronic devices which he resold on eBay. Ryder also kept the proceeds from selling town-owned youth sports equipment. Further, he collected a \$16,000 kickback when he arranged for the Parks and Recreation Department to sponsor an exercise program at a local gym, amounting to half of the gym's profits.

The OIG conducted the investigation, and the Attorney General's White Collar and Public Integrity Division prosecuted the case.

The OIG recently published [guidance](#) with recommendations that municipalities can implement to minimize the risks inherent in cash transactions.

**“The public has a right to expect public employees to serve the interest of the community and to not use their position as an avenue for self-enrichment. This case highlights the necessity of strict internal controls for handling cash as well as the OIG’s commitment, along with our law enforcement partners, to hold those with nefarious intent accountable.”**

**-IG Jeffrey Shapiro**

Much of the cash Ryder stole was drawn from entrance fees and concessions at Hinkley Swim Pond in Medfield.



## Northeastern Co-ops Gain Real-World Experience at the OIG, continued from front page

Co-op students mix semesters of classroom work with semesters of full-time employment in a field that interests them. According to Northeastern's Undergraduate Cooperative Education Student Handbook, the program is "one of the [university's] fundamental experiential learning programs where students engage with the world through professional work." The program constitutes "an integral part of a Northeastern education," helping to jump-start careers.

The university reports that around 92 percent of full-time undergraduate students have at least one "work and learn" co-op experience. The OIG is one of over 3,800 employers offering student co-op opportunities through Northeastern's program.

Joining the OIG for the 2025 fall semester are **Grace Guinee**, **Yaelle Ortiz**, and **Schuyler Palmer**, who are working as assistant investigators in the Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division; **Tasnim Eissa**, an assistant investigator in the Government Outreach and Public Policy Division; and **Ayah Bouchouary**, an operations coordinator in the Operations, Training and Publications Bureau.

Guinee, who will graduate in May 2026, has previously worked as a research assistant at Northeastern's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

**"As a combined criminal justice and psychology major, I've had professional experience in the social work and education fields, but never in an investigative environment,"** Guinee says. **"As such, I was seeking a position that allowed me to explore investigations in a meaningful way. I was drawn to the OIG because of its desire to integrate their co-ops into not only the investigative process, but the broader team as well."**

Ortiz, a criminal justice and international affairs major, was recently accepted into Northeastern's "Plus One" Master's Program. After completing her undergraduate studies in two years, she will stay on for an additional semester to earn her master's in public policy.

**Northeastern co-op Yaelle Ortiz is a criminal justice and international affairs major, and was recently accepted into the "Plus One" Master's Program for a master's in public policy.**



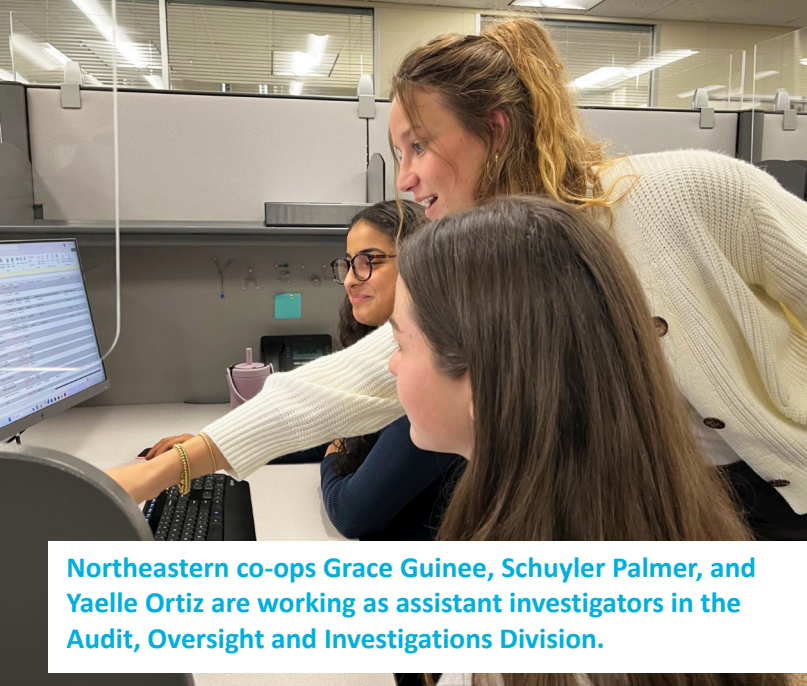
**"The OIG's broad scope means I get exposure to all kind of topics, which will sharpen my investigative skills and help me to understand government structure and the policy side of things. I've always been interested in a career in the law, and understanding how a case begins prior to taking legal action feels like an important foundation,"** Ortiz says.

Palmer is a criminal justice and psychology major who will graduate in May 2026.

**"I was drawn to the OIG to experience hands-on investigations,"** Palmer says. **"My previous co-op at the Children's Advocacy Center of Suffolk County dealt more with the victims and results of a crime and led me to want to get involved sooner to try and prevent crimes from ever happening. And I have learned so much about the broad scope of the OIG's work."**

Eissa is an economics major who will also graduate in May. She plans to pursue a master's degree in economics and ultimately hopes to work in government service or policy analysis.





Northeastern co-ops Grace Guinee, Schuyler Palmer, and Yaelle Ortiz are working as assistant investigators in the Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division.

Previously a development intern for Make-A-Wish Foundation of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Bouchouary is planning a career in law or business, potentially focusing on compliance issues or global strategy. The international affairs and international business major expects to complete her undergraduate work in May 2027.

**“I have always found the intersection of government and business interesting, which drew me to the role in office operations,”** Bouchouary says. **“Being able to learn so much about how government works has been interesting, and supporting the OIG’s mission has meant a lot to me.”**

The OIG also derives innumerable benefits from working with the students.

George A. Xenakis, who heads up the OIG’s Audit, Oversight and Investigations Division, has mentored co-ops for many years and considers the program a win for all.

“Our Northeastern co-ops are an integral part of the AOI team and provide invaluable help in conducting our investigations and moving them forward,” Xenakis says. “While AOI provides our co-ops with real-life work opportunities and valuable experiences, our co-ops in turn provide AOI’s staff with fresh outlooks and perspectives, including their working knowledge of new tools and technologies.”

**“I was drawn to the OIG because of its mission to promote transparency, accountability, and good governance,”** Eissa says. **“I wanted the opportunity to contribute to meaningful public service while developing practical skills in oversight, policy, and government operations. This co-op is exceeding my expectations in terms of mentorship and the variety of projects.”**

## IG Shapiro Testifies on Proposed Chapter 30B Amendments

Citing feedback received from municipal leaders during his “listening tour” across the Commonwealth, IG Shapiro testified this summer in support of several pieces of legislation that address issues relevant to the OIG’s oversight responsibilities.

The OIG filed House 12, *An Act Updating Chapter 30B*, House 13, *An Act Relative to Snow Hauling and Removal*, and House 16, *An Act Relative to County Land Disposition*, last November. All three measures are before their respective committees for consideration. The bills collectively propose changes to the



IG Shapiro on a site visit to Needham, where he was able to get a first-hand look at the town’s snow removal operations.



Uniform Procurement Act (codified as Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws) and to the statutory provisions specifying the process that county governments must use when disposing of surplus real property.

The OIG put forth the Chapter 30B proposals in previous legislative sessions, but the bills were not passed. IG Shapiro stressed in his testimony that, while Chapter 30B is not necessarily at the top of the legislative agenda, the recommended changes would aid cities and towns across the entire Commonwealth in more effectively procuring needed products and services.

“I know this because I’ve traveled across our Commonwealth to speak directly with [municipal employees on procurement issues]. I listen to them, lots of them,” IG Shapiro said in his testimony. “I have spoken with municipal leaders in their city or town halls one-on-one or with members of their leadership team. I have conducted close to 60 of these municipal stakeholder meetings in all regions of the state . . . so I really do believe I understand the impact that the changes offered

in these bills will have to our municipal leaders in all parts of the Commonwealth.”

IG Shapiro lent his support to House 12 on July 15 as he testified before the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight. The measure proposes raising most of Chapter 30B’s “price thresholds” that determine the methods that local governments use to procure or dispose of supplies and services. The bill as filed proposes raising the maximum threshold at which government bodies can purchase supplies or services using “sound business practices” from \$10,000 to \$15,000. In his comments to lawmakers, IG Shapiro recommended further raising that threshold to \$25,000, given the increase in prices across the economy.

House 12 also proposes raising the upper threshold for procuring supplies or services with written price quotations (as opposed to a competitive sealed bidding process) from \$50,000 to \$100,000. That change would bring municipalities in line with the threshold applicable to school districts.

At the same hearing, IG Shapiro also spoke in favor of House 13, which would add snow hauling and removal to Chapter 30B’s current procurement exemption for snow plowing.

“Private contractors often find it more attractive to contract for snow plowing services if snow hauling and removal services are included. Without the ability to contract for these services together, municipalities may lose contractors to private customers,” Shapiro said in written comments to the committee.

A week later on July 22, IG Shapiro testified before the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government in support of House 16, which proposes clarifications to the statutory process a county government must use when disposing of surplus real property.

Current law requires that municipalities offer surplus land “to the [C]ommonwealth,” but does not designate a specific state official to receive such offers. Nor does the current statute provide a time frame for the Commonwealth to act on the

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**“These changes are necessary for the leaders of the communities you represent to do their jobs effectively.”**

**-IG Jeffrey Shapiro**



offer. House 16 would require county governments to make written offers of surplus property to the Commissioner of the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) before selling or leasing the land to another party. The Commissioner would then have up to 90 days to accept the offer on behalf of DCAMM or another state agency.

As of the *OIG Bulletin's* publication, House 12 and House 13 remain in their initial committees. House 16 is currently before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

## ***Factfinding Mission: Using Requests for Information***, continued from front page

especially when you are venturing into new territory. An RFI allows you to gather information from potential vendors about their capabilities, products, or services.

Even when you have some previous experience procuring the needed supply or service from a particular vendor, you may not have the information to know whether that vendor is providing you with the best quality for the most competitive price. An RFI can be a great opportunity for you to better understand the landscape before leading your community into the details of a procurement.

An RFI can help answer questions such as: What are key industry terms and what do they mean? What quantity is the product or service measured or sold by? How can I best frame a future solicitation that will help vendors effectively respond?

Unlike other procurement instruments – such as invitations for bids (IFB), requests for proposals (RFP), requests for quotes (RFQ), or requests for responses (RFR) – an RFI does not result in a contract. Instead, an RFI assists a jurisdiction in understanding the current state of the marketplace and informs the development of a solicitation for the needed supplies or services.

As its name indicates, an RFI is an information-gathering tool. It does not oblige a jurisdiction to later issue a solicitation. Nor does an RFI mean that a jurisdiction must include any of the RFI's provisions or responses in a solicitation.

Further, a vendor's decision to respond to an RFI is entirely voluntary. Jurisdictions should not use RFI participation or nonparticipation to prequalify or shortlist potential vendors or to advantage or disadvantage any potential vendor in a later solicitation.

Some jurisdictions may not fully consider issuing an RFI, positing that the process will lengthen the procurement process or that the same information is available through the actual solicitation, whether an IFB, RFP, RFQ, RFR, or other procurement method.

It is true that conducting an RFI may not be helpful for every procurement, particularly for ones where your jurisdiction is familiar with the supply or service being acquired. However, in the right circumstances, incorporating an RFI into your procurement timeline can help the process run more effectively. It could prevent the need to re-issue a solicitation when the first process failed to request key facts or did not elicit vendor responses that you can easily compare.

By conducting an RFI, you can identify vendors in the marketplace, ask questions about the products or services they provide, and better understand exactly what you are looking for so that you can refine your solicitation and conduct the best procurement possible.

Moreover, the RFI process can be a great learning opportunity for your procurement team. An RFI can familiarize your employees with industry terminology and can help them confidently navigate a later solicitation. They will be better prepared to participate in vendor information sessions, ask questions on vendors' offered supplies or services, and evaluate vendor responses.

Simply put, conducting an RFI is not about adding steps to an already complicated process. An RFI is about acquiring the information you need to design your solicitation in an effective way.



# On the Road with IG Shapiro

*“Public leaders make the best decisions when they are out engaging with those who do the hard work of governing, day in and day out.”*

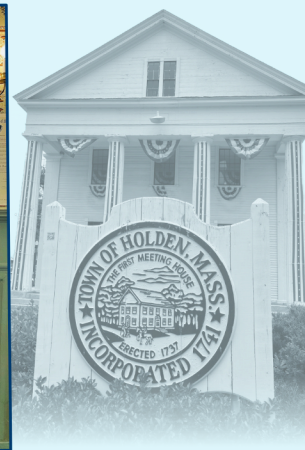
**-IG Jeffrey Shapiro**

In summer 2025, IG Shapiro continued his listening tour through the state, dedicating two days every month to meeting with municipal leaders and stakeholders across the Commonwealth and discussing their concerns and unique challenges surrounding good governance, touching on topics such as public procurement, construction, staffing, and knowledge transfer.

On June 23, IG Shapiro’s listening tour took him through Middlesex County, where he first met with **Arlington Town Manager James Feeney**, **Deputy Town Manager Alex Magee**, **Purchasing Agent Mary Ellen De Natale**, **Deputy Town Counsel Jaclyn Munson**, and **Town Counsel Michael Cunningham** (pictured left). Afterward, he stopped in **Waltham** where he met with **Mayor Jeanette McCarthy** and in **Lexington** where he met with **Town Manager Steve Bartha**.



On June 26, IG Shapiro traveled to Worcester County, where he met with **Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis** and discussed the sheriff’s work in corrections and legislative matters in relation to the OIG’s statute. Shapiro also met with **Boylston Town Administrator April C. Steward** and her staff and with **Holden Town Manager Peter Lukes** (pictured right).



On July 24, IG Shapiro made it out to the Berkshires, first speaking with **Berkshire Community College President Ellen Kennedy** (pictured left) on topics such as enrollment, nursing and business degree programs, noncredit programs, and the school leadership’s commitment to student success. Afterward, he stopped in **Hancock** to meet **Select Board Chair Sherman Derby**, **Police Chief James Rodda**, and **Town Secretary Jan Lillie**, in **New Ashford** to meet **Select Board Chair Jason Jayko**, in **Lenox** to meet **Town Manager Jay Green**, and in **Lee** to meet **Town Administrator R. Christopher Brittain** and his staff.





IG Shapiro’s listening tour took him to southeastern Massachusetts on July 29, where he first stopped in **Mattapoisett** to meet **Town Administrator Michael Lorenzo, Town Accountant Brent Lydon, Town Treasurer Kristie Costa, Select Board Chair R. Tyler Macallister, and Police Chief Jason King** (pictured left). Afterward, he stopped in **Bourne** to meet with **Town Administrator Marlene McCollem and Assistant Town Administrator Liz Hartsgrove**, in **Wareham** to meet with **Town Administrator Derek Sullivan**, and in **Marion** to meet with **Town Administrator Geoffrey Gorman**.

IG Shapiro drove out to Hampden County in central Massachusetts on August 12, stopping in to see **Holland Town Administrator Stacy Stout** (pictured right) and **Wales Executive Secretary and Town Accountant Pamela Leduc and Town Clerk Sarah Ryan**. He then visited **Hampden Town Administrator Brian Domina**, along with **Select Board Chair John Flynn and Select Board Member Donald Davenport**, and **Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz**.



On August 28, IG Shapiro went north to Essex County. His first stop was in Haverhill, where he appeared on **Win Damon’s morning show “Win for Breakfast”** over **97.9 WHAV FM** (pictured left) and discussed the **OIG’s** role in the Commonwealth, his listening tour, and how his meetings with municipal leaders have informed his work. From there he went to **Newbury** to meet **Town Administrator Tracy Blais**, to **Rockport** to meet **Town Administrator Mitchell Vieira and Select Board Chair Paul Murphy**, and to **Essex** to meet **Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki**.



## OIG Launches ‘One Free Designee – Schools’ Program

In the three months since the OIG rolled out the “One Free Designee – Schools” (OFD-S) program in July, 63 school districts and charter schools have enrolled.

**The OIG Academy is funded through revenue it earns rather than through a legislative appropriation.**

The OFD-S program promotes good government and best practices in public procurement. OFD-S absorbs the costs for one employee from each of the Commonwealth’s public school districts, regional school

districts, education collaboratives, and charter schools to take the three classes required for the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation. OFD-S is modeled on the OIG’s previous “One Free Designee” program, which was available to city and town employees through the OIG Academy.

IG Shapiro said, “After meeting with over 60 municipal leaders, I understand that the state’s procurement laws can be difficult to navigate. Those laws are critical to ensuring that public purchasing is done fairly and transparently and that the public is getting the best value for its dollar. This is the driving force behind the One Free Designee programs. More training will provide local officials with the tools they need to protect public resources from fraud, waste, and abuse.”

Taken together, the three core classes required for an MCPPO Designation normally carry costs of \$1,785. In July 2023, IG Shapiro recognized that this cost could be a barrier for some municipalities and began to offer tuition-free training for one employee in every city and town of the Commonwealth. Over 200 communities participated in the inaugural One Free Designee program.

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## Coming Soon!

This fall, OIG Academy learners will notice changes to the way course payments are processed.



**Clicking the “Make Payment” button will redirect registrants to a payment portal.**

- Registrants will no longer receive a separate link to an outside payment vendor.
- Registrants will only need to enter payment information; other registration information will be automatically captured.
- Registrants will receive a payment receipt by email.



**Upon payment, registrants will receive an email confirming enrollment.**

- If a course has prerequisites, payment will be processed after a review of the registrant’s transcript. All registrants will receive an email confirming enrollment status.

The OIG Academy will share more information once this change goes live.



Leah Zippin, Director of Business and Operations for Monson Public Schools, recently signed up for the One Free Designee – Schools program.

**“I am pursuing MCPPO certification to ensure our school district operates with transparency, compliance, and efficiency in all procurement matters,”** Zippin said. **“Having a certified designee on staff not only protects our district from costly mistakes, but also ensures that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and in full accordance with state laws.”**

Eligible applicants must be authorized by their superintendent of schools or education collaborative executive director before filling out the One Free Designee – Schools form. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Each district is limited to one enrollee, who must complete all coursework between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.

School district personnel who are current MCPPO enrollees may use the program for the classes they have yet to take. The program is also open to those who wish to renew their MCPPO Designation (see the article below).

Questions? Please contact the OIG Academy at [ma-igo-training@mass.gov](mailto:ma-igo-training@mass.gov).

**216** communities participated in the inaugural One Free Designee program

**36** communities were first-time MCPPO participants

**63** communities have signed up for OFD-Schools as of September 23

## Keep in Mind

**Your MCPPO Designation is Valid for Three Years. Do You Need to Renew It?**

When did you earn your Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) Designation? An MCPPO Designation is valid for three years from the date of issue. If you are coming up on three years, you will need to renew.

By renewing your designation, you ensure that you are current in public purchasing knowledge and skills.

What do you need to do?

**(1) Complete the MCPPO Designation Renewal class.** You should take the class within 18 months of the expiration of your designation.

**(2) Earn 11 continuing education credits in addition to the MCPPO Designation Renewal Class.** You can earn these credits at any time during your three-year MCPPO period by taking OIG Academy classes or other procurement-related trainings outside of the Academy.

**(3) Complete the OIG’s CORI Acknowledgment Form.**

You can then renew online using the **MCPPO Renewal Application**. You will be asked to confirm the above information and will need to upload the CORI form with a copy of a government-issued ID.

The application also asks that you list your relevant procurement-related work history. The MCPPO Designation requires at least three years of professional experience in a procurement-related position. If you are starting your public procurement career and are interested in earning your designation early, the OIG offers an Associate MCPPO Designation for those with less than three years’ experience.



# How to Manage Risks and Measure Success for New Programs

## Introduction

When your jurisdiction launches a new program, it is important that you take steps to manage the program's risks and measure its success. Preparing your jurisdiction to address risks that could arise from a new program will help you prepare for the unexpected. And measuring indicators of success will help you determine whether your jurisdiction's program is on the right track or if it needs adjustment.

## Managing Risks

Risks can come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but they arise from the kind of work the program administers. Some risks are easy to comprehend, such as physical safety, while others are more nuanced, such as ineffective outreach (e.g., members of a target population never learn about the program). The consequences of risks can also vary widely, ranging from financial waste, to reputational damage, to a failure to realize the program's goals. Identifying potential risks is a continuous process. The goal of risk management is to prioritize risks and to execute written plans to minimize or avoid them.

## Measuring Success

Sometimes even a well-managed program does not produce the desired results. But if your jurisdiction can know when a program is falling short, leaders can take steps to adjust the program (or its administration) and increase the likelihood of ultimate success. One way to measure success is through the collection and review of key performance indicators (KPIs), which are metrics an organization identifies as being linked to program success or to achieving program goals. KPIs can be quantitative (e.g., How many students attended the after-school program?) or qualitative (e.g., Do students say they enjoy the after-school program?). A program administration plan should identify relevant KPIs and explain how they will be collected. Leaders should use KPIs to help understand the program and make needed decisions to improve outcomes.

## What Can You Do?

### A. To manage risks for a new program:



#### 1. Conduct a risk brainstorming meeting.

Early in the program planning process, conduct a meeting to brainstorm foreseeable risks that might arise over the course of the program. During this meeting, staff members should ask themselves, "What might go wrong?" Your jurisdiction should also determine the significance of each risk, based on the likelihood that the risk will occur and its potential harm or impact. The most significant risks should receive the most attention.



#### 2. Develop action plans to address each risk.

Your jurisdiction should create an action plan designed to eliminate or minimize the impact of each identified risk. For example, if a risk is that your target population would never learn about the program, your action plan might involve a communications strategy aimed at reaching out to communities where the target population lives. Depending on the significance of the risks involved, your action plan may also advise that jurisdiction staff be assigned to monitor the program's risks.



#### 3. Use these action plans to guide the program's administration.

The action plans that your jurisdiction develops should inform how leaders administer the project. For example, a communications strategy implemented to address an outreach risk could affect the schedule for the new

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program. That strategy may also involve additional costs, which you should incorporate into the program budget. If the communications strategy requires monitoring, you may need to allocate additional staffing. Considerations related to budgeting, scheduling, and staffing should all be reflected in a written project administration plan that is readily accessible to all members of the project team.

## B. To measure the success of a new program:



### 1. Identify KPIs when designing the program.

When designing a new program, your jurisdiction should identify KPIs designed to measure whether the program is achieving its purpose and goals. For example, if your jurisdiction embarks on a program to help residents install solar panels, KPIs could include data on how many households participated in the project, how much power the panels generated, the level of emissions reduced through the solar energy source, and residents' savings on installation costs.



### 2. Measure KPIs regularly, consistently, and confidently.

Your jurisdiction should periodically measure KPIs throughout the duration of the program. The process that your jurisdiction uses to measure each KPI should be reflected in the program administration plan. Implement

good data practices to ensure that program decision-makers can rely on the KPIs and confidently make decisions based on that data.



### 3. Use KPIs to inform program decisions.

KPIs are only valuable if they are useful. Your jurisdiction should encourage program leaders to incorporate KPIs into their management practices and provide training to others as needed. Leaders should use KPIs when deciding whether changes to the program are warranted. For example, in measuring how many residents participate in a job training program, a leader may discover that enrollment has dropped significantly in particular areas over time. Based on that information, the program leader could evaluate whether further outreach efforts should be employed to increase enrollment.

For more information about program management, please refer to the OIG's February 2025 advisory, [Practical Considerations for Performance Management](#).

## Conclusion

Before starting a new program, your jurisdiction should consider how it will manage risks and measure the success of the undertaking. That means starting early and detailing a clear process. Incorporating risk management and KPI analysis into the implementation of a new program will help you avoid foreseeable harm, improve use of limited resources, and engender public support. Combined, these tools will become the foundation of your program's success.



The OIG's transportation oversight team made a site visit to the North Station Draw One Bridge in Boston on September 24, which the MBTA is replacing and modernizing. The bridge crosses the Charles River and services the MBTA's commuter rail system.

2. Definitions.
3. Procurement contracts; files.
4. Submission of quotations.
5. Competitive sealed bidding procedures.
6. Competitive sealed proposals; requests for proposals; additional evaluation criteria.
- 6A. Utilization of reverse auctions for the acquisition of supplies and services.
- Sole source procurements.
- Emergency procurements.
- Cancellation of invitation for bids; rejection of bids or proposals.

# Chapter 30B

## Hot Topics

The OIG provides technical assistance on public procurement-related questions to local officials and the general public on Chapter 30B, otherwise known as the Uniform Procurement Act. Chapter 30B is intended to foster fair competition in public contracting. The law governs the processes that the Commonwealth’s cities, towns, and other local jurisdictions must follow in awarding government contracts for supplies, services, and real property. Chapter 30B also establishes procedures for a municipality’s disposition of surplus supplies and real property.

**Public Procurement Technical Support Team**

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The topic discussed below illustrates the subjects the OIG’s Public Procurement Technical Support Team recently entertained from localities with questions on navigating Chapter 30B requirements.

### How to Increase a Contract’s Quantity under Chapter 30B

After signing a contract, you may find that your jurisdiction needs to increase the quantity of supplies or services specified in that contract. For example, you may have contracted for 50 computers, but later realize that you need to purchase 10 additional computers.

How should you proceed?

Under Section 13 of Chapter 30B of the Massachusetts General Laws (Section 13), your jurisdiction can increase the quantity of supplies or services specified in a contract provided that four important conditions are met.

First, the unit price for the contract extension must be the same or less than the original contract.

Second, your jurisdiction’s procurement officer must document in writing that the increase proposed is (1) necessary to fulfill the needs of your jurisdiction; and (2) more economical and practical than going out to market to procure another contract.

Third, all parties must agree to the contract increase in writing.

Fourth, the cost of the increase must not exceed 25% of the original contract price.

Note that if you procured multiple items (for example, desks, chairs, and file cabinets) under a single office equipment contract and you later need to purchase additional desks, your purchase limit is 25% of the **total contract price**, not just the price of the desks.

Section 13 creates an exception to the 25% price cap for contracts supplying “gasoline, special fuel, fuel oil, road salt or other ice and snow control supplies.” Such contracts must still follow Section 13’s other three requirements. For other supply or service contracts, if increasing quantities would increase the original contract’s price by more than 25%, your jurisdiction must conduct a new procurement for the additional items needed.



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To view the current class schedule and to register for a class electronically, please use the link below. If you have any questions, please contact us at (617) 722-8884.

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