



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority

NOTICE OF POSTING
OIG Case # IG-18-011
Respondent: Demetric Adams

Pursuant to 605 ILCS 10/8.5 (e)(3), the attached summary report is being posted to the Illinois Toll Highway Authority's public website. As required by law, the Office of the Inspector General for the Illinois Toll Highway Authority sent a copy of this report to the Respondent and gave her 15 days to provide suggested redactions or a written response. Respondent did not respond.

OIG issued a summary report on August 3, 2018 describing its investigation that provided reasonable cause to find that a Summer Temp – Toll Collector, Demetric Adams (Adams) retained unauthorized control over Tollway revenue in June and July 2018. Toll Audit provided a Toll Collection Performance Report that reflected cash shortages ranging from \$98.00 to more than \$600.00 on 11 out of 12 days she worked between June 16 and July 1, 2018. Toll Audit also provided video recordings of Adams during her shifts that showed Adams handling currency in suspicious ways, such as removing currency from the money tray, placing it under the keyboard or in a drawer under the booth counter and later putting that money in her vest or pants pockets, rather than the deposit or transport bags provided.

When interviewed by OIG investigators on July 13, 2018, Adams denied taking the money and claimed any money she put in her pockets was hers, but she could not explain the shortages other than to claim she may have misclassified some vehicles. Despite her denials, the documentary and video evidence support a finding of reasonable cause to believe that Adams stole at least \$4,000 in Tollway revenue during her short tenure. Following her interview, Toll Operations placed Adams on Suspension Pending Investigation, and subsequently discharged Adams on July 17, 2018.

Based on this investigation, had Adams not been discharged, OIG would have recommended discharge. OIG recommends that Adams be considered ineligible for re-hire. The OIG provided this information to the Lake County State's Attorney's Office, and an arrest warrant has been issued on Theft and Official Misconduct charges.



**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
SUMMARY REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
OIG Case #IG-18-011
August 3, 2018**

This report provides a summary of evidence set out in the attached investigative materials, and the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG's) analysis of that evidence. An index of these investigative materials is attached.

I. INTRODUCTION

On July 6, 2018, the Toll Audit Department reported a series of large cash shortages associated with the collection activity of Summer Temp - Toll Collector Demetric Adams (Adams) at Plaza 21. Toll Audit provided a Toll Collection Performance Report that reflected cash shortages ranging from \$98.00 to more than \$600.00 on 11 out of 12 days she worked between June 16 and July 1, 2018. Toll Audit also provided video recordings of Adams during her shifts which showed Adams handling currency in suspicious ways, such as removing currency from the money tray, placing it under the keyboard or in a drawer under the booth counter and later putting that money in her vest or pants pockets. Further investigation identified additional shortages between July 2 and July 11.

When interviewed by OIG investigators on July 13, 2018, Adams denied taking the money and claimed any money she put in her pockets was hers, but she could not explain the shortages other than to claim she may have misclassified some vehicles. Following her interview, Toll Operations placed Adams on Suspension Pending Investigation, and subsequently discharged Adams on July 17, 2018. Tollway collection reports reflect a pattern of large collection revenue shortages between June 16 and July 11, 2017 that total more than \$4,500. This shortage cannot be explained by misclassification or other error. The booth video footage clearly shows Adams removing currency from the cash drawer area and putting it into her pocket. Despite her denials, the documentary and video evidence support a finding of reasonable cause to believe that Adams stole approximately \$4,500 in Tollway revenue. Subsequently, the OIG learned that Toll Operations discharged Adams effective July 17, 2018.

Based on this investigation, had Adams not been discharged, OIG would have recommended discharge. OIG recommends that Adams be considered ineligible for re-hire. The OIG will also forward this information to the Lake County State's Attorney's Office for consideration of criminal prosecution.

II. APPLICABLE RULES, REGULATIONS, LAW

A. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 1: General Policies and Responsibilities, Section A: Fundamental Principles, provides in relevant part:

3. The Tollway requires public trust and confidence in its employees. Integrity is essential. Employees must act according to the highest ethical principles and standards, in accordance with the Tollway's Code of Ethics, the State of Illinois Code of Personal Conduct, and all applicable

local, state and federal laws imposing standards of ethical behavior. Employees should avoid all situations that could give the appearance of conflict of interest or impropriety. Violations will be grounds for discipline up to and including discharge.

B. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 7: Employee Conduct and Discipline, Section A: Employee Conduct, provides in relevant part:

...[T]he Tollway expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of both the employees and the organization. The rules of conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to follow Tollway or Departmental policies or procedures, including safety rules
- Neglect of duties

C. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 7: Employee Conduct and Discipline, Section L: Theft and Misappropriation, provides in relevant part:

Any employee who commits theft or misappropriation of Tollway property, participates in the theft or misappropriation of property belonging to others while on duty or present on Tollway premises, or has knowledge of such a theft or misappropriation and fails to promptly report it, may be subject to discipline up to an including discharge.

D. Toll Collectors Introduction Booklet; Cash Handling Section (p. 31), provides:

Secure money at all times. Do not mix your money and the Tollway issued bank or the collected tolls. Do not place money inside pockets, coats use a transport bag. Do not leave money unattended for any reason.

E. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/33-3 (a) (2) Official Misconduct:

(a) A public officer or employee or special government agent commits misconduct when, in his official capacity or capacity as a special government agent, he or she commits any of the following acts:

- (2) Knowingly performs an act which he knows he is forbidden by law to perform;

F. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/16-1 (a) (1) (A) Theft:

(a) A person commits theft when he or she knowingly:
(1) Obtains or exerts unauthorized control over property of the owner:
(A) Intends to deprive the owner permanently of the use or benefit of the property;

G. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/16-1 (a) (2) (4.1) Theft:

- (a) A person commits theft when he or she knowingly:
 - (2) Obtains by deception control over property of the owner;
 - (4.1) Theft of property from the person not exceeding \$500 in value, or theft of property exceeding \$500 and not exceeding \$10,000 in value, is a Class 2 felony if the theft was committed in a school or place of worship or if the theft was of governmental property.

III. BACKGROUND

A. Subjects/Parties Involved

1. Demetric Adams, Summer Temp-Toll Collector

Adams was hired as a Summer Temp-Toll Collector on May 15, 2018. She was assigned employee number 3336¹ and worked at Plaza 21, which is located at 39155 N. Mill Creek Road, Wadsworth, Illinois 60083. No prior discipline appeared in her personnel file. Tollway records reflect that she worked from May 15, 2018 until she was placed on suspension pending investigation on July 13, 2018. On July 17, 2018 Adams was discharged by the Tollway.

IV. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION

A. Documents

1. Toll Collection Performance Report (Performance Reports)

Performance Reports are preliminary unaudited reports showing cash variances attributable for a collector on their shift. The Performance Report for Adams starting on May 17, 2018, shows that she was able to perform her duties and that her variances were within threshold levels for several days. However starting on June 16, 2018, the report reflects large shortage totals for June 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30 and July 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11, 2018 total \$4,584.28.

2. TC-32 Collector History Report (TC-32 Report)

TC-32 reports issue after the deposits and Money Room counts are verified and identify when a Toll Collector's deposited funds are less than expected based on the Collector's vehicle classifications as compared to Tollway records. TC-32 reports are only generated when shortages exceed acceptable tolerances and cannot be reasonably attributable to some other error such as misclassification.

The TC-32 Report for Adams for the period of June 16 – July 11, 2018 reflects a total cash shortage of \$4,584.28.

B. Video Recording from Plaza 21 booths

¹ Note some Tollway records incorrectly list her name as Demetris Adams.

Toll Audit provided video footage from the booth cameras where Adams worked. The cameras are located in the ceiling at the front of the booths facing the Toll Collector and captures the money tray that hangs on the counter at which the collector sits or stands, the Manual Lane Terminal (MLT) and the keyboard by which the Collector enters transactions into the MLT. Under the counter to the right of the Collector is a drawer where the clear plastic transport and deposit bags are stored. Videos obtained include footage from June 16, 19, 28, 2018 and July 6, 7, 8, and 9, 2018.

C. Chart

The following chart was created by the OIG to summarize the video footage on June 16 and 28, the two days of the largest shortages of \$621.26 and \$430.62. Recordings from other days with large cash shortages document similar suspicious activity by Adams.

Date	Video Start Time	Activity
June 16, 2018	11:54 a.m.	Adams retrieves cash from under the counter on her lower right and grabs a couple of supplies from near her keyboard. Adams then walks to the back of the booth and puts something into her left vest pocket.
June 16, 2018	1:11 p.m.	Adams retrieves cash from under the counter on her lower right and appears to put it in her left vest pocket.
June 28, 2018	7:05 p.m.	Adams counts out bills and sets a stack of the money under her keyboard
June 28, 2018	7:18 p.m.	Adams retrieves what appears to be money from under the counter on her lower right, counts it and retrieves another bill from the money tray and the bag of money and sets it in her lower right.
June 28, 2018	7:20 p.m.	Adams retrieves what appears to be money from under the counter on her lower right and puts it in her left vest pocket.

D. Interview

Demetric Adams

On July 13, 2018, OIG investigators interviewed Demetric Adams providing her Voluntary Advisements, orally and in writing, which she acknowledged understanding. Adams was asked, orally and in writing, for consent to audio record the interview. Adams consented to have the interview audio-recorded.

In summary, Adams stated the following.

Adams said that she has only ever put her own personal money in her pockets which she would do prior to her shift so she could go to the vending machines on her break. Adams said "I don't steal." After being informed that there is video of her putting money in her pockets, Adams said that she keeps pens and change in her pockets. She does not put any cash or dollar bills in her pockets unless it is her own money.

After being informed that collector reports and videos indicate she took Tollway cash, Adams claimed she did not take approximately \$4000, or even a smaller amount. Adams said, "it's no amount" and "I don't take anything from nobody." But Adams was unable to explain any of her cash shortages.

Adams was shown one video clip from June 16, 2018 at approximately 1:11 p.m. of her putting money into her front vest pocket. Adams said that it was her own money and that she normally puts her own personal money into the money drawer too. When asked if she is co-mingling her funds with Tollway funds, Adams said, "no, not really." Adams asserted that she sticks her own money in the back of the drawer and the Tollway money in a money bag.

Adams said that when she needs dimes and nickels, if she does not have a clear transport bag, she will "put it in [her] pocket" to go get change. When asked to confirm that she transports the money in her pocket, Adams said, "no, I don't put it in my pocket" and that she will just hold the money.

Adams does not know why she has been having daily shortages for her drawer since mid-June.

Adams said, "I'm not going to take no money." Adams does not think she took the money by accident. Adams said, "not no \$4,000." When asked if there was a different amount that sounds correct for the shortage amount, Adams said no.

Reimbursing the Tollway for the shortage amount is not something she would be willing to do because she would not be able to without a job and because she did not take the money. However, if she had the money, she would pay the Tollway back but there would probably have to be a payment plan because she is a single mother of three kids. "I can't just get no \$4,000 back and I can't see myself taking no \$4,000."

V. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

The OIG received information from Toll Audit that there were large cash shortages by Adams. OIG reviewed the materials provided by Toll Audit and initiated an investigation.

Records indicate that there was a significant cash shortage on June 16, 2018, and that similar large cash shortages occurred during almost every shift Adams worked thereafter until her interview with OIG on July 13, 2018. The video recordings provided by Toll Audit show Adams appearing to put Tollway currency in her pockets on numerous days there were large cash shortages.

When interviewed by OIG, Adams claimed she never took Tollway money. But she provided no explanation for the large cash shortages. Despite her denials, the documentary and video evidence support a finding of reasonable cause to believe that Adams stole approximately \$4,500 in Tollway revenue.

Based on this investigation, had Adams not been discharged, OIG would have recommended discharge. OIG recommends that Adams be considered ineligible for re-hire. The OIG will also forward this information to the Lake County State's Attorney's Office for consideration of criminal prosecution.

VI. VIOLATIONS

As detailed more fully above, the OIG investigation has established reasonable cause to find that Adams violated the following laws, rules, and regulations:

- A. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 7: Employee Conduct and Discipline, Section A: Employee Conduct.**
- B. Toll Collectors Introduction Booklet; Cash Handling Section Page 31**
- C. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 7: Employee Conduct and Discipline, Section L: Theft and Misappropriation**
- D. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 1: General Policies and Responsibilities, Section A: Fundamental Principles**
- E. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/33-3 (a) (2) Official Misconduct**
- F. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/16-1 (a) (1) (A) Theft**
- G. Illinois Compiled Statutes 720 ILCS 5/16-1 (a) (2) (4.1) Theft**