

45 Years of Independent Oversight



Governor Maura Healey issues a gubernatorial citation honoring the OIG’s 45th anniversary. Pictured from left to right: OIG Senior Executive Assistant Nataliya Urciuoli, OIG Communications Officer Carrie Kimball, Governor Healey, IG Shapiro, Deputy IG Susanne O’Neil, and OIG Government Outreach and Public Policy Director Josh Giles.

“Just as Massachusetts played a pivotal role in the founding of our nation two hundred and fifty years ago, the Commonwealth also took the lead in establishing the nation’s first statewide independent agency to safeguard public resources from fraud, waste, and abuse. Independent oversight is deeply rooted in our founding principles of government by, of, and for the people.”

-IG Shapiro, upon the 45th anniversary of first Massachusetts Inspector General Joseph Barresi’s oath of office

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‘Broken, Expensive, and Resistant to Oversight’

A Look into the Commonwealth’s Indigent Defense System

In May 2025, private indigent defense attorneys, also known as bar advocates, in Middlesex and Suffolk counties refused to take new criminal cases in protest of pay rates set by the Legislature. The ensuing crisis in the Commonwealth’s justice system saw 9,000 criminal defendants go without representation, 1,689 cases dismissed, and 213 defendants released from custody without bail.

Lawmakers passed legislation in July 2025 directing the OIG to review the Commonwealth’s indigent defense system, including the rules and requirements for determining indigency, attorney caseloads, oversight of bar advocates, and best practices from other jurisdictions.

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A Word from Inspector General Jeffrey S. Shapiro

45 Years of Impactful Change



Good day.

On June 29, 1981, Joseph Barresi, the Commonwealth's and the nation's first statewide inspector general, took the oath of office. He set out to "organize an office with both a preventative and investigative capability," and started with "good wishes, an empty floor, a desk, a statute and an appropriation."

In the years since, each of the subsequent inspectors general have made their mark on the office and delivered results for the people of the Commonwealth. Hundreds of investigations, reports, and letters have yielded legislative reforms, indictments, recouped funds, and improved internal controls.

Under my leadership, the OIG has issued reports and letters on special education transportation, the need to change the governance structure of the Cannabis Control Commission, improper longevity payments to a sitting mayor, the budgets and expenditure of the sheriffs' departments, and the Steamship Authority's website development project, just to name a few. This work has produced real, impactful change. The Legislature restructured the governance of the CCC and added specific line items in the sheriffs' budgets as our report recommended. The newly appointed Steamship Authority GM has publicly expressed his approach to use our report as a roadmap for change, and the Ethics Commission initiated an adjudicatory proceeding against a former mayor. In short, the OIG is making government work better tomorrow than it works today.

As important, I have listened. As the only statewide inspector general with municipal oversight, I have prioritized municipal outreach. To date, I have met 115 municipal leaders in their respective city or town halls. Traveling to the cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth has given me a true appreciation for the specific challenges and realities that municipal leaders face.

And I have heard. As a result of these meetings, the OIG has advocated for commonsense changes to the Commonwealth's municipal and local government procurement laws and has covered the cost of tuition for a number of trainings for municipalities and school districts. In addition, the OIG issues a monthly advisory designed especially for municipal and local leaders – *OIG In Your Inbox* – that provides guidance on risk mitigation in specific areas to help safeguard public funds from fraud, waste, and abuse. If each city or town leader acts on the monthly recommendation, imagine the risks mitigated across the Commonwealth in just one year, with continuous process improvements.

The OIG shares a fundamental belief with our colleagues in state and municipal government that government must effectively work for the people it serves, whether paving a local road, procuring school transportation, or developing highway service plazas. When the public's money is being spent, it must be done fairly and transparently and must be used for the intended purpose. That is why it is important for the OIG to engage with you – its stakeholders. If there is something we can do to make it easier for you to do your jobs well, we want to hear from you.

I believe this approach fulfills IG Barresi's vision of "an office with both a preventative and investigative capability."

Best,



Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG

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IG Shapiro visits the construction site of the new Nashoba Regional High School in Bolton.

Recent Investigations and Case Updates

“Longevity payments are a tool to reward and retain highly sought after, skilled municipal employees. Standing for election is a proactive affirmative decision by an individual and thus does not require a retention bonus. A mayor’s total compensation should be determined by a city council in full view of a city’s voters.”

-IG Jeffrey Shapiro, at the time of the 2025 letter’s publication

Ethics Commission Brings Complaint Against DeMaria

In April, the State Ethics Commission initiated an adjudicatory proceeding against former Everett Mayor Carlo DeMaria, finding reasonable cause to believe that DeMaria violated the conflict of interest law by improperly receiving longevity payments from the City of Everett and concealing some of those payments in the city budget.

According to the Ethics Commission website, an adjudicatory proceeding is a process that determines whether a public official has violated the conflict of interest law found in Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

The conflict of interest law prohibits municipal employees from using their official position to solicit or receive anything of substantial value that is not authorized by statute or regulation. The Commission’s “order to show cause” outlining the case against DeMaria alleges that the former mayor violated this prohibition by receiving longevity payments he was not entitled to receive. The order further alleges that by concealing his longevity payments in a human resources budget line item, DeMaria denied the public a chance to challenge the amount or frequency of the payouts.

The Commission is authorized to impose a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 for each violation of the conflict of interest law and may also order restitution payments.

The Commission’s allegations echo a February 2025 [public letter](#) to the Everett City Council in which IG Shapiro detailed an OIG investigation finding that \$180,000 in longevity payments were improperly paid to DeMaria. The OIG investigation found that the mayor and his administration misapplied the mayoral longevity ordinance to increase payouts to DeMaria and hid those payments from the city council and the public.

IG Shapiro’s letter also called on the City Council to conduct an audit of all payments made to the mayor and recover any overpayments. He also recommended that the city council eliminate longevity payments to elected officials, require members of the city council and the mayor’s administration to take specialized training on their fiduciary obligations, and strengthen controls in the city’s finance department. 

The OIG's resulting report, *An Analysis of Indigent Defense in Massachusetts: Balancing Accountability with Indigent Defendants' Right to Counsel*, describes how the problems facing the Massachusetts public defense system go beyond pay rates for bar advocates. The report lays out the twofold challenge confronting the system: (1) staff attorneys with the Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS), the Commonwealth agency that assigns public defenders to represent indigent clients, have failed to take on 20% of new cases as required by law; and (2) the system does not incentivize bar advocates to take additional cases because there is no limit on how much bar advocates can bill on the cases that CPCS assigns them.

"The Commonwealth's public defense system is broken, expensive, and resistant to oversight," said IG Shapiro. **"Systemic issues such as how indigency is determined, ensuring CPCS staff attorneys carry the required caseload, and changing the fee structure for bar advocates must be addressed so the Commonwealth can sustainably provide for indigent defendants' Sixth Amendment right to counsel. The findings and recommendations in this report need not conflict with the right to counsel. Indeed, an indigent defense system is a use of public dollars and is subject to the same scrutiny and oversight as any other public expenditure."**

In addition to assigning cases to its own staff attorneys, CPCS oversees private bar advocates, attorneys who are hired to assume the indigent defense cases that CPCS attorneys do not take (envisioned by the Legislature to be 80% of new cases). The OIG found that CPCS employs a bifurcated system for CPCS attorneys and bar advocates, with different ways of assigning cases, managing caseloads, conducting fiscal oversight, providing training, determining conflicts, and maintaining communication.

The OIG further found that CPCS attorneys work the lowest number of cases of any of the eight statewide public defender systems for which the OIG found comparable data. In fact, the OIG found that the average number of new cases assigned to individual CPCS staff attorneys on an annual basis – 72 cases – was roughly half the number of the next-lowest state, Vermont, which assigns an average of 140 new cases to staff attorneys. Among comparable statewide systems, the OIG found that Massachusetts was the most expensive system on a cost-per-new-case basis.

Additionally, the OIG's investigation found that the process used by Massachusetts Probation Services to determine indigency is outdated, inconsistent, and fails to adequately control for the potential misuse of public dollars. That makes it likely that a significant number of defendants receive state-funded legal representation without demonstrating a verified need.

"Fiscal accountability and oversight is not inconsistent with the right to counsel and, indeed, is necessary for any public entity," said IG Shapiro. 



OIG Recommends Ways to Address Sheriffs' Budgets

As detailed in the March 2026 edition of the *OIG Bulletin*, chronic overspending by the Commonwealth's 14 sheriffs that culminated in a historic combined deficit of \$110 million in Fiscal Year 2025 prompted the Legislature to pass a law directing the OIG to investigate and report on the sheriffs' spending, compensation levels, and compliance with state finance law.

Consistent with its legislative mandate, the OIG released its *Final Report on Sheriffs' Budgets and Expenditures* on June 1, expanding upon and supplementing the OIG's preliminary findings issued in a [February 27 report](#).

In conducting its investigation, the OIG examined the substantive nature of the sheriffs' work, the budget process, and fiscal management. The OIG concluded that many factors contribute to sheriffs' overspending, including underfunding of the sheriffs' offices in the Commonwealth's annual General Appropriations Act that is later addressed through supplemental funding; a lack of clarity on sheriffs' statutory duties; and programs operating outside of the Commonwealth's accounting system.

To improve the sheriff offices' financially unsustainable position, the OIG's report offers dozens of short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations for action needed by the Legislature, the sheriffs, the Comptroller, and A&F. The wide-ranging recommendations cover areas such as the budget process, the handling of civil process revenue, controls on monetary transfers between accounts, inmate housing, and sheriffs' discretionary law enforcement activities.

The final report also acknowledges the positive steps taken by the Legislature (for example, employing a more itemized approach to the sheriffs' appropriations in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget) and the sheriffs (for example, taking steps to reduce payroll spending) since the publication of the preliminary report.

"I believe all stakeholders agree that past improper and illegal practices cannot continue. That said, solving the budget issues and eliminating deficit spending is a multi-year effort and will require compromise from all stakeholders," IG Shapiro said. 

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Office provides a deputy sheriff to serve as the town of Winthrop's deputy harbormaster.



45 Years of Independent Oversight

On June 29, 1981, Joseph Barresi, the Commonwealth's first inspector general and the nation's first statewide inspector general, took the oath of office.

Four and a half decades later, Massachusetts's leadership and commitment to independent oversight was formally recognized by Governor Maura Healey, who on June 29 issued a gubernatorial citation honoring the Massachusetts Inspector General's Office for 45 years of service to the people of the Commonwealth and its steadfast commitment to making government work better

tomorrow than it works today. Legislative citations from Senate President Spilka and Speaker Mariano were presented to the OIG, along with congratulatory letters and citations from Attorney General Campbell, Auditor DiZoglio, and Will Fletcher, Inspector General for the Gateway Development Commission and President of the Association of Inspectors General.

The OIG is planning other events to commemorate the inaugural year of the office. 





A Look Back at 2025

Annual Report Showcases OIG's Impact

The OIG's 2025 Annual Report, issued on April 30, presents a panorama of the OIG's work during the last calendar year in investigations, public program reviews, and educational outreach. The third year of IG Shapiro's term represented another highly impactful year for the OIG.

In addition to the OIG's tireless work of protecting the public's dollars at the state and local government levels, in 2025 the OIG used its informational publications, the *OIG Bulletin* and the newly-launched *OIG In Your Inbox*, to deliver timely, quality guidance in how to strengthen government integrity. The OIG's educational arm, the OIG Academy, continued to educate state and local government employees, procurement professionals, private industry, and individuals on good governance practices, public purchasing laws, contract administration, and fraud prevention. The Inspector General personally met with 60 municipal leaders and leadership teams in 2025, in addition to leaders in 39 state and quasi-independent agencies, to discuss the challenges they encounter in their day-to-day public work.

Among the report's highlights, in 2025 the OIG:

- Released numerous public letters laying out investigative findings of fiscal wrongdoing in areas such as [bid-splitting](#), [cash handling](#), [timekeeping controls](#), and [misuse of town credit cards](#). These findings were accompanied by the OIG's recommendations to effectively address those problems.
- Completed its review and [issued a report](#) on the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority's wasteful website development project, which revealed deep-seated problems in the authority's governance. The Steamship Authority's development of a new website without prioritizing needed updates to the associated ferry reservations system, coupled with poor project management, saw the website development costs balloon from \$2 million to over \$4 million. The OIG's investigation revealed multiple failures on the part of the authority, including the failure of its leaders to recognize the business risk posed by its decades-old reservation

system; its former general manager's failure to heed warnings from consultants and to give reliable updates on the project's status to the authority's governing board; and the governing board's failure to exercise meaningful oversight over the authority's spending. The OIG's report called on the authority and its board to review their project planning, execution, and oversight practices while setting a "tone from the top" that values employee input and respects public funds.

A Look Inside

The 2025 Annual Report highlights the reports and public letters released by the OIG throughout the year, but also lays out much of the less public but just as high-value investigatory work and reviews undertaken by the OIG's divisions, including its Transportation Division, its Division of State Police Oversight, and the Bureau of Public Integrity, which oversees health and human services in the Commonwealth. The report also presents the OIG Academy's 2025 educational initiatives, and IG Shapiro's continued municipal outreach.

- [Reported its findings](#) on longevity payments wrongfully collected by the then-mayor of Everett. The OIG's investigation found that the then-mayor proposed an ordinance authorizing mayoral longevity payments, deliberately misapplied the ordinance passed by the city council to wrongfully collect \$180,000, and concealed the payments in an obscure budgetary line item. In response to the OIG's findings, the city council took steps to review all payments to elected officials.
- Completed its work examining factors contributing to the Brockton Public Schools' historic \$18 million budget deficit in Fiscal Year 2023. Outlining its findings in a [December 3 letter](#), the OIG found that the budget was inherently flawed from the start, containing inaccurate and unreasonably optimistic projections for student retention and tuition reimbursements. The OIG also found that the school committee and school leaders did not effectively respond to clear warning signs of the district's deteriorating financial condition. Further, the OIG found that the measures ultimately implemented to address the deficit were not strictly enforced and were not proportionate to the scale of the problem. The OIG accordingly made numerous

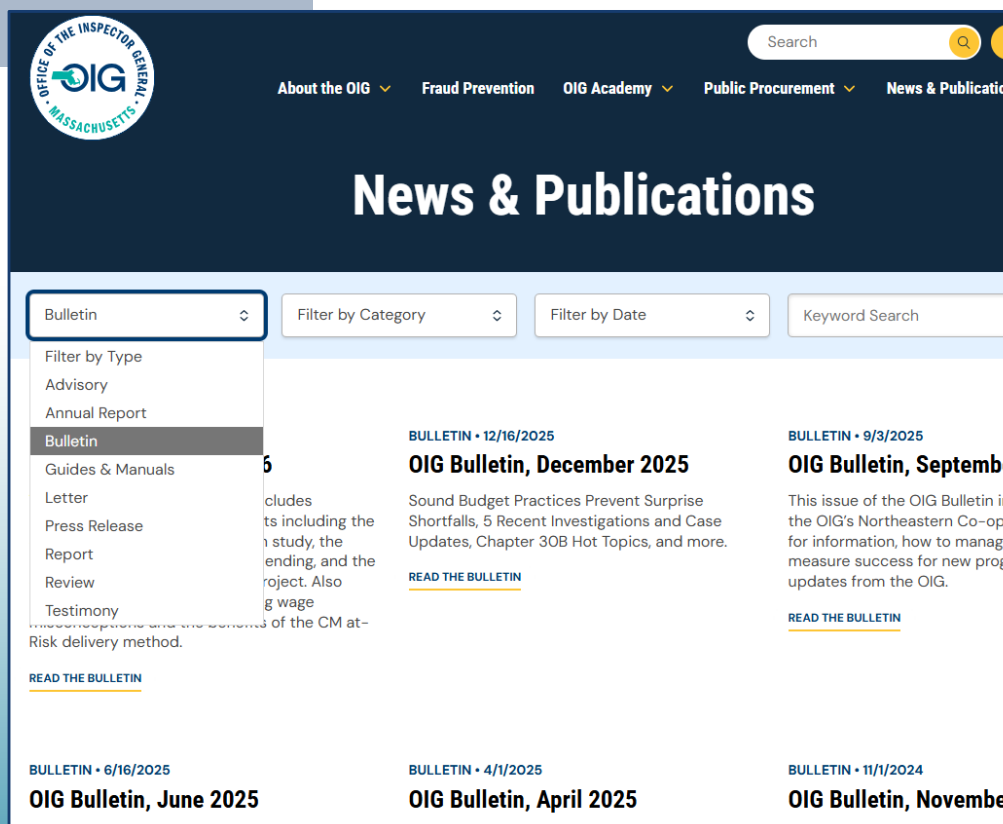


recommendations to improve Brockton Public Schools' budget management practices, many of which have since been adopted.

- Led investigations resulting in over \$650,000 in restitution orders in 2025.
- Launched its "One Free Designee – Schools" program, which during its run from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, allowed each of the Commonwealth's public school districts, regional school districts, education collaboratives, and Horace Mann and Commonwealth charter schools to enroll an employee in the courses required for the MCPPO Designation. The OIG absorbed the \$1,885 cost for the 131 school districts that signed up for the program.

- Debuted its monthly advisory publication, *OIG In Your Inbox: Insights, Advisories and Alerts*, which shares helpful information for municipalities to strengthen business practices and mitigate risks. Conceived as an idea discussed at one of IG Shapiro's one-on-one meetings with municipal leaders, *In Your Inbox* is an action-oriented publication created exclusively for mayors, town managers, administrators, and select board chairs. A new issue each month advises municipal leaders on how to effectively mitigate risks with minimal effort. *In Your Inbox* has provided guidance to municipal leaders on topics such as establishing internal controls, mitigating the risk of accepting cash payments, and contracting with concessionaires. 

OIG Unveils New Website



The OIG launched a new website in May with enhanced user-friendly functionality. Information on topics such as fraud prevention and public procurements – as well as publications such as *OIG Bulletins*, reports, and letters – are now easily located. As always, the OIG's website enables users to (1) report fraud, waste, and abuse and (2) sign up for classes through the OIG Academy's course catalog. Check out our improved online presence at maoig.gov.



On the Road with IG Shapiro

As the OIG celebrates its 45th year of working to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse of public assets, IG Shapiro's listening tour has continued to take him inside city and town halls across the Commonwealth as part of his discourse with municipal leaders and to listen to their concerns and pain points. Hearing from local leaders adds insight to the OIG's focus on making government work better tomorrow than it works today.

IG Shapiro has visited 24 municipalities and 26 state agency leaders thus far in 2026 and has attended a host of meetings that touch on the OIG's mandate.

Following up on the OIG's December 2025 report, *The Steamship Authority's Website Development Project*, IG Shapiro attended a public meeting in Nantucket and one on Martha's Vineyard in April. Sen. Julian Cyr, representing Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket, and Rep. Thomas Moakley, representing Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket, invited IG Shapiro to speak on the report's findings and recommendations, including those to improve the Steamship Authority's responsibilities to manage projects effectively and exercise stringent financial oversight of public dollars.



Also in April, IG Shapiro presented at the "Story of a Building" seminar, co-hosted by the OIG with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The seminar provides an opportunity for school officials who have managed school construction projects to share insight and lessons learned on



IG Shapiro stopped for an interview with WCAI radio on his way to a public meeting in Martha's Vineyard, where he touched on the challenges facing the Steamship Authority.



those projects with other school districts in the process of building schools. This year's seminar took place at Doherty Memorial High School in Worcester.

In May, IG Shapiro presented at the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials 2026 Conference and Annual Institute in Falmouth (see photo on previous page), where he elaborated on how school districts can enhance their knowledge in how to conduct effective public procurements. This presentation included a discussion about

the OIG's recent *Special Education Transportation Study*.

In June, IG Shapiro spoke at the annual meeting of the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts in Westminster, along with Operational Services Undersecretary Mark Fine. IG Shapiro took the opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between the OIG and the professionals from across the Commonwealth who are charged with leading small towns. 



IG Shapiro, along with other members of the OIG's leadership, visited Devens in July 2026 to learn how MassDevelopment manages the unique aspects of the former military base.

Check out our summer class schedule

The summer months provide an excellent opportunity to hone your knowledge in public procurement and other aspects of sound governance. The OIG Academy is offering a range of informative classes in July and August, covering topics such as municipal and local government procurement requirements, electric vehicle procurements, public contracting, contract administration, and fraud prevention and mitigation awareness. Check out the Academy's current [course catalog](#) for a full list of offerings and to register for an upcoming class. We look forward to seeing you!

The Academy's fall schedule will be available in August.

When does my MCCPO Designation expire?

Have you ever wondered when your MCPPO Designation expires? The OIG Academy is now issuing reminder emails to help you stay on top of your renewal. Beginning three months prior to your Designation's expiration, you will receive a monthly email reminder that your renewal date is approaching. Please use this notification to act on your renewal. It is critical to maintain your MCPPO Designation as long as you remain in a profession that conducts procurements.

Updated MCPPO renewal course and requirements

In our continued efforts to ensure the MCPPO program provides the most enriching and valuable learning experiences, the OIG Academy has redesigned the MCPPO Designation renewal course. The new highly interactive and project-based course provides a practical review of

Coming Soon!

Your Voice Matters!

The OIG Academy will soon launch a feedback survey for the **Procurement Technical Support Line**, and we can't wait to hear from you! Your insights will help us improve, innovate, and serve you better. Keep an eye on your inbox in the coming days and take a few minutes to share your thoughts through the survey link. Thank you for your participation.

municipal and local government procurement regulations and best practices for public design and construction contracting. With the implementation of this enhanced renewal course, we are **reducing the number of continuing education (CE) credits needed to renew your MCPPO Designation from 11 CE credits to 6 CE credits.**

Designees whose MCPPO Designation expired on or after July 1, 2026, must:

- Successfully complete the [MCPPO Designation Renewal class](#) (14 credits) within the 18-month period before your Designation expires. You may not retake a core class in place of the renewal class.
- Earn an additional 6 continuing education (CE) credits before the expiration of your Designation, which is 3 years from the date of issue. MCPPO core classes are not eligible for CE credits.

Continued on the next page

- Complete the [renewal application \(MCPPO Designation course\)](#) through the OIG Academy Dashboard. **Please note that as of July 1, 2026, the application process no longer includes a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check.**

For more information regarding the MCPPO Designation, visit our [website](#). 

New! OIG Offers MCPPO Renewal Amnesty Program

The **new MCPPO Renewal Amnesty Program** allows municipal employees with an MCPPO Designation that lapsed between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2025, to reinstate their designation without having to re-take the full 60-credit program. The OIG will cover the \$495 cost of the MCPPO renewal course for amnesty program participants.

Individuals who enroll and complete the renewal course and six additional continuing education credits between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, will be able to apply for Designation renewal under this special program. While the OIG will cover the costs of the

renewal course, participants are responsible for the costs of the additional continuing education credits needed to satisfy Designation requirements.

The program has a limit of two participants per municipality. Applicants must be authorized by their Mayor, Select Board Chair, or Town Administrator/Manager. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information and to access the MCPPO Renewal Amnesty Program form, visit our [website](#).

The OIG is excited to announce the publication of a new edition of its municipal and local government procurement manual, *The Chapter 30B Manual: Procuring Supplies, Services and Real Property*.

The newly updated July 2026 edition of the municipal and local government procurement manual supersedes the 2023 edition and includes information about recent statutory changes that affect municipal and local government procurements, including new options for procuring electric vehicles, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and broadband services. The manual also presents updated information on how to submit documentation to the OIG for chief procurement officer (CPO) delegations and energy-related procurement exemptions.

The OIG's municipal and local government procurement manual is the go-to resource for municipal and local government employees across the Commonwealth to

understand the legal requirements and best practices related to public procurements. Officials in cities, towns, school districts, and other local jurisdictions use the manual to obtain the best value in their procurements for supplies, services, and real property. The municipal and local government procurement manual is one way that the OIG carries out its mission to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse of public assets, thereby protecting taxpayer resources in all of our communities.

The OIG's municipal and local government procurement manual is available on the [OIG's website](#). If you have any questions about procurements governed by Chapter 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act, please reach out to the OIG's [Public Procurement Technical Support team](#). 

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Class Information

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.

Course Catalog

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