

Excerpts from MDEAT finance employee complaint about spending improprieties

Mr. William Diggs has requested of me either directly or indirectly through other staff members within the department on numerous occasions to engage in deceptive behavior. Please see details of these events below.

- In July 2022, Mr. Diggs had requested that we sponsor a welcome reception for Mr. Woods, who he said was a new businessman who recently moved to Florida. Our contracts officer, Mr. Simmons stated “so are you trying to use public funds to pay for a private event?” Also, we were told that the cost was mostly for food and drinks, which is an unauthorized purchase according to Miami Dade County procurement rules. Mr. Diggs stated that he would have the Miami- Dade Chamber of Commerce pay for the event and then reimburse them. He reached out to the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce staff to cover the cost and in November 2022 they subsequently invoiced us for \$6,448.00 on Invoice 1302 for General Services which Mr. Diggs stated covered the venue, photographer, etc. I was weary of his statement because the photographer for the event, Mr. Mark Hill sent us an invoice directly #99103 for \$325 which was processed for payment previously.

- In July 2022, on numerous occasions Mrs. Shelia Powell Cohen, Event planner and Ms. Clevell Brown- Jennings, Executive Assistant approached me with invoices for venues that had food and/or drinks on them for processing although I had told them previously that the county does not pay for food. On one of those occasions Mrs. Cohen had one of our suppliers state “**all inclusive**” on the invoice to mask that the cost included food.
- In August 2022, a reception was held to recognize judges and attorneys who participate in our Teen Court program. There were teenagers present at this event. Also, there was alcohol served at this event because you could clearly see two gentlemen standing by what appeared to be a bar as wine bottles and glasses were present. The venue had submitted an invoice to us which also included a cost of \$2,150 for 2 bartenders and wine/alcohol. This amount was rejected for payment and Mr. Diggs wrote a check from the Foundation for Youth and Economic Development to the vendor to cover this charge.