

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

ED QUATREVAUX, INSPECTOR GENERAL



July 24, 2012

Desiree Charbonnet, Administrative Judge
New Orleans Municipal Court
727 South Broad Street
New Orleans, LA 7019

Dear Administrative Judge Charbonnet,

I am writing to advise you that the Office of Inspector General has referred a matter concerning former Administrative Judge Paul Sens to the Judiciary Commission.

Attachment A lists the names and incomes of eighteen (18) of the former Administrative Judge's family members who work or have worked in the Municipal Court of New Orleans. Relatives of Judge Sens were employed at a collective cost to the City of New Orleans of \$39,000 per month for the period January 2010-to-date; the cost was just over \$1.2 million dollars for this period.

The Commission will take whatever action it deems appropriate. It may find that the hiring and employment of these eighteen (18) family members did not violate applicable ethics codes.¹ But building a family dynasty at the expense of the taxpayers of New Orleans creates an appearance of abuse that undermines public confidence in the judiciary and our elected officials.

Abuse involves behavior that is deficient or improper when compared with behavior that a prudent person would consider reasonable and necessary business practice given the facts and circumstances. Abuse also includes misuse of authority or position for personal financial interests or those of an immediate or close family member or business associate. Abuse does not necessarily involve fraud, noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements. (Emphasis added).²

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Ed Quatrevaux
Inspector General

¹ "A Judge Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety in All Activities; A Judge ... shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary." Canon 2A, Code of Judicial Conduct (emphasis added).

"A Judge Shall Perform the Duties of Office Impartially and Diligently; A judge should exercise the power of appointment impartially and on the basis of merit." Canon 3B(4), Code of Judicial Conduct (emphasis added).

² Government Accountability Office. (December 2011 Revision). *Government Auditing Standards* (p. 142) United States Government Accountability Office by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Municipal Court Employees related to Judge Sens

					Earnings		
	Name of Employee	Relation to Judge Sens	Position in Municipal Court	Status	2010	2011	2012*
1	Sens, Stephen Patrick	Son	Part Time Office Assistant	Inactive – 2011	\$4,172	\$2,053	\$0
2	Sens, Mary	Sister-in-law	Full Time Clerk 1	Inactive – 2000	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	Lampard Sens, Caroline	Sister-in-law	Full Time Court Clerk Supervisor	Active	\$52,746	\$58,449	\$31,188
4	Sens, Christopher P.	Nephew	Full Time Clerk of Court	Active	\$57,652	\$99,549	\$54,012
5	Sens, Colin P.	Nephew	Full Time Clerk 1	Active	\$31,672	\$39,601	\$17,230
6	Sens, Edward F	Nephew	Full Time Clerk 4	Inactive – 2005	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	Crowley, Lenee Sens	Niece	Full Time Minute Clerk	Active	\$47,220	\$61,088	\$32,446
8	Sens, Meghan	Niece	Part Time Clerk 2	Inactive – 2005	\$0	\$0	\$0
9	Comiskey, Lauren	Cousin	Part Time Office Assistant	Inactive – 2011	\$5,777	\$2,947	\$0
10	Devlin, Amanda	Cousin	Part Time Office Assistant	Inactive – 2009	\$0	\$0	\$0
11	Schnell, Stephanie Comiskey	Cousin	Full Time Assistant Judicial Adm.	Active	\$73,174	\$83,971	\$44,503
12	Hyer, Carley	Niece-in-law	Part Time Clerk 2	Inactive – 2007	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	Hyer, Casey	Niece-in-law	Part Time Office Assistant	Inactive – 2011	\$0	\$2,446	\$0
14	Dicarolo, Jessica Sens	Niece-in-law	Full Time Clerk 2	Inactive – 2003	\$0	\$0	\$0
15	Lampard, Ronald Edward	Brother to Sister-in-law	Full Time Clerk of Court	Inactive – 2010	\$129,010	\$0	\$0
16	Bagnetto, Mary Altmyer	Cousin-in-law	Full Time Senior Office Assistant	Active	\$55,436	\$61,110	\$31,818
17	Naccari, Paolo A	Nephew-in-law	Full Time Clerk 1	Inactive – 2005	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	Crowley, Dan	Nephew-in-law	Full Time Minute Clerk	Active	\$49,212	\$52,065	\$32,030
					<u>\$506,071</u>	<u>\$463,281</u>	<u>\$243,226</u>

\$1,212,578

* Through 7/14/12