



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Justice

(202) 514-3435 | oig.justice.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 28, 2018

DOJ OIG Releases Management Advisory Memorandum Concerning Unlawful Fundraising on Behalf of the DEA Survivors Benefit Fund

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a Management Advisory Memorandum to the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) identifying a concern that DEA field offices could be violating federal fundraising regulations.

The memorandum arises out of an investigation in which the DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) concluded that a DEA field division sold merchandise and other items in what is called a “recreational store” within the office from 2000 to 2017 and provided the proceeds to the DEA Survivors Benefit Fund (SBF), a private, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, in contravention of federal ethics regulations. Despite the DEA’s guidance in 2015 to all DEA employees, and despite training provided to all DEA division Special Agents in Charge (SACs) in November 2016 fundraising in the workplace, the field division’s SAC did not appreciate that his division was acting in contravention of the fundraising rules. When the DEA’s Office of Chief Counsel advised the field division of the violation, the SAC promptly shut down the store and gave the store’s unsold merchandise to the SBF.

Based upon information developed during the investigation, including the field division SAC’s interactions with the SBF leadership and the DEA’s apparent relationship with the SBF, it appears that other DEA field divisions may currently be operating similar stores for the benefit of SBF in violation of federal ethics regulations. The OIG’s memorandum therefore makes four recommendations to the DEA to ensure that DEA field divisions operating recreational stores are in compliance with federal regulations.

Please note that some of the names in the memorandum are pseudonyms. Each pseudonym is identified in a footnote. Redactions to the public version of the memorandum were made to protect individual privacy.

Today’s memorandum also references a separate investigation into allegations that a DEA employee in another DEA field division had solicited donations to the SBF from non-federal entities. A summary of the findings of that investigation was also released today and is available [here](#).

Management Advisory Memorandum: The memorandum released today is available on the OIG’s website under “Recent Reports,” and at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2018/memo-180328.pdf>.

###