



INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Jared Prentice, Inspector General

OFFICE: INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (IDOC)
TITLE: FORMER IDOC EMPLOYEE GIFTS RULE VIOLATION
CASE ID: 2024-03-0090
DATE: June 20, 2025

Inspector General Staff Attorney, Will Deane, after an investigation by Special Agent Jason Fajt, reports as follows:

The Indiana General Assembly charged the Office of Inspector General (OIG) with addressing fraud, waste, abuse and wrongdoing in the executive branch of state government. Ind. Code §4-2-7-2(b). The OIG also investigates allegations of criminal activity and Indiana Code of Ethics violations by state workers. Ind. Code §4-2-7-3. The OIG may recommend policies and carry out other activities designed to deter, detect and eradicate fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement and misconduct in state government. Ind. Code §4-2-7-3(2).

I. Complaint

On January 23, 2024, the OIG received a complaint concerning Kurt Bensheimer, former Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) Deputy Chief of Security. The complaint alleged that Bensheimer violated the Gifts rule, found in 42 IAC 1-5-1, by accepting an expense-paid trip in February of 2024, to Stockholm, Sweden from Micro Systemation AB (MSAB), a former IDOC vendor with a business relationship with IDOC.

II. OIG Investigation

OIG Special Agent Jason Fajt investigated the complaint. As part of the investigation, Special Agent Fajt interviewed several current and former IDOC employees, including

Bensheimer and his supervisor at the time of the trip, IDOC's Executive Director of Investigations and Intelligence (IDOC Director). Special Agent Fajt also reviewed documents, including Bensheimer's emails, texts, PST files and quotes and communications regarding contracts between IDOC and MSAB.

Special Agent Fajt learned that Bensheimer started working for IDOC in April of 2006. After achieving the ranks of Sergeant, Lieutenant and Intelligence Officer, Bensheimer worked as IDOC's Program Director 1, Deputy Chief Security Threat Group Operations, Investigations and Intelligence Division from 2011 through May 2024. Bensheimer affirmed that he took the biennial online ethics training required of state employees.

Special Agent Fajt found that MSAB was an active vendor with IDOC for several years. MSAB provided digital forensic technology to IDOC that helped process cell phone and tablet evidence. He obtained the MSAB Supplier Summary showing MSAB as an approved supplier with the State of Indiana beginning in April of 2015.

Bensheimer stated that he first became involved with MSAB around October 2017, when he went to the Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) to visit their internal affairs operation on behalf of IDOC. The TDOC tour included showing Bensheimer and other IDOC staff the MSAB devices TDOC was using. Bensheimer then worked with MSAB by setting up trainings and requesting quotes for submission to the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA). The IDOC Director told Special Agent Fajt that Bensheimer was IDOC's "go-to guy" for MSAB and for other technology solutions. Both Bensheimer and the IDOC Director confirmed that the last IDOC contract with MSAB expired in July of 2023. After that contract expired, Bensheimer said he was told repeatedly that funding was not available for another MSAB contract.

Special Agent Fajt also learned MSAB and Bensheimer communicated on potential future business. On September 19, 2023, an MSAB Salesperson emailed Bensheimer two quotations, one for \$60,975.00 and another for \$48,045.00. On September 20, 2024, Bensheimer emailed his then-supervisor and IDOC Executive Director of Investigations and Intelligence (Former IDOC Director) requesting to renew the MSAB licenses that expired July 15, 2023. During his interview with Special Agent Fajt, Bensheimer confirmed he received quotes from MSAB and updated the Former IDOC Director on potential costs, despite the lack of adequate funds.

On October 17, 2023, Bensheimer met with the MSAB Salesperson and MSAB Lead Technical Sales Engineer at IDOC to discuss terms for license renewals between MSAB and IDOC. The MSAB Salesperson followed up with Bensheimer on December 1, 2023, to see if IDOC needed anything else from her to move forward with the license renewal. On December 21, 2023, Bensheimer met with several MSAB representatives via a Microsoft Teams meeting. Also on December 21, 2023, Bensheimer emailed IDOC Executive Director of Contracts and Compliance (IDOC Contracts and Compliance Director), explaining that despite the hold on processing that she had put on the MSAB contract renewal, Bensheimer was ready to proceed with processing the contract – largely because IDOC had been without the ability to process cell phones since July 2023. The IDOC Director responded that after meeting with the IDOC Contracts and Compliance Director, they would see where the funding for the contract would come from.

Bensheimer stated MSAB first approached him about the possibility of being a guest speaker for a MSAB conference that was supposed to be in Sydney, Australia but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Bensheimer first learned of his opportunity to present at the MSAB conference in Sweden around December 5, 2023, when an MSAB representative called him. Bensheimer received a more formal email invitation on December 22, 2023. The email

offered to pay for Bensheimer's flights and hotel accommodations for up to three nights. Bensheimer forwarded his invitation to IDOC Travel and the IDOC Director.

On January 9, 2024, the IDOC Travel Coordinator asked Bensheimer whether he had his flight itinerary for his trip to Sweden. Bensheimer mentioned he was waiting on his passport to arrive but that it would come soon. Bensheimer received and forwarded to IDOC travel an itinerary from Expedia on January 11, 2024, costing \$1,867.07. According to the itinerary, Bensheimer's departing flight was on February 5, 2024, and his return flight was on February 8, 2024. The hotel reservation in Stockholm was for February 6, 2024, through February 8, 2024.

On January 18, 2024, the IDOC Director emailed the IDOC Travel Coordinator and Bensheimer a notification that Bensheimer's travel authorization request had been sent back for revision. At the IDOC Former Director's retirement celebration on January 31, 2024, Bensheimer told the IDOC Director that he would be on vacation for the upcoming week and taking time off the next week as well.

Special Agent Fajt also learned that Bensheimer accepted the compensated trip offer and went to Sweden. He confirmed that the cost of the trip was \$1,867.07. Bensheimer said he did not consider the gift rule in accepting MSAB's offer because he did not view it as a gift, as it was business-related travel. Bensheimer departed from Indianapolis on February 5, 2024, arrived in Stockholm on February 6, 2024, presented at the MSAB conference, then flew home on February 8, 2024. In Stockholm, Bensheimer attended a conference center-provided buffet-style lunch on February 7, 2024, with the MSAB CEO and other MSAB officials that Bensheimer estimated to be a ten-dollar value. Other than presenting at the MSAB conference, Bensheimer said he walked around Stockholm for half an hour, practiced his presentation and had dinner with another

presenter, paid for by themselves. Bensheimer stayed two nights at a hotel in Stockholm. Bensheimer claimed MSAB offered to extend his stay in Stockholm, but he declined.

III. Analysis

The OIG investigation revealed that Bensheimer violated 42 IAC 1-5-1, the Gifts Rule. 42 IAC 1-5-1 reads in relevant part:

(a) A state employee...shall not knowingly solicit, accept, or receive any:
gift; (2) favor; (3) service;...[or] (4) travel expenses...
From a person who has a business relationship with the employee's...agency

Ind. Code §4-2-6-1(a)(13) defines “person” as “any individual, proprietorship,...group, limited liability company, or corporation, whether or not operated for profit.” MSAB is a Swedish company that is publicly traded; therefore, MSAB is a “person” for 42 IAC 1-5-1’s purposes.

Ind. Code §4-2-6-1(a)(5) defines “business relationship” as including “dealings of a person with an agency seeking, obtaining, establishing, maintaining, or implementing: (i) a pecuniary interest in a contract or purchase with the agency.” MSAB formerly provided software and services as a vendor to IDOC, whose formal engagement with MSAB was not renewed in 2023. After the formal engagement between MSAB and IDOC was not renewed in 2023, an ongoing relationship continued in the interest of potential further business – largely through Bensheimer, who served as the point of contact between IDOC and MSAB. Accordingly, for purposes of 42 IAC 1-5-1, MSAB is a person who had a business relationship with Bensheimer’s agency.

In summary, the OIG investigation found evidence that Bensheimer violated the Gifts Rule because while working for IDOC he accepted full compensation of airfare and hotel expenses for a trip to Stockholm, Sweden from MSAB, a person with a business relationship with IDOC.

IV. Conclusion

On April 10, 2025, the OIG sought probable cause from the State Ethics Commission

(Commission) that Bensheimer violated 42 IAC 1-5-1, the Gifts rule. The Commission found probable cause for an ethics complaint, and the OIG filed an ethics complaint with the Commission on May 12, 2025. Subsequently, Bensheimer and the OIG entered into an Agreed Settlement in which Bensheimer admitted to the violation of 42 IAC 1-5-1 and agreed to pay a \$1,867.07 fine within sixty days of the Commission's approval of the Agreed Settlement. The OIG presented the Agreed Settlement to the Commission on June 12, 2025, and the Commission approved the Agreed Settlement. Accordingly, this investigation is closed.

Additionally, the OIG makes the following recommendation to IDOC going forward to help its employees avoid Gifts rule violations.

Recommendation

The OIG recommends IDOC leadership remind employees of the restrictions in the Gifts rule. This could be through an agency-wide memorandum, email or training. The OIG provides ethics trainings on the Code of Ethics in general or on specific rules to agencies upon request.

Bensheimer admitted that he did not think his acceptance of travel funds from MSAB implicated the Code of Ethics. Additionally, our investigation revealed that IDOC leadership communications regarding Bensheimer's trip lacked acknowledgment of or discussion of any Code of Ethics issues until after he returned from Stockholm. A reminder on the Gifts rule should help supervisors better determine when a Gifts rule issue arises within IDOC and therefore enable the agency to better recognize and proactively address potential Gifts rule violations.

Dated: June 20, 2025

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Prentice", written over a horizontal line.

Jared Prentice, Inspector General