



Inspector General Insights

Background: On April 23, 2021, a private citizen contacted the Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding a complaint against a Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller's (Clerk's) employee.

When the OIG interviewed the private citizen, he stated:

- He was issued a traffic citation by the Florida Highway Patrol office.
- On or about March 26, 2021, he contacted the Clerk's office and requested information about the names of the Clerk's approved driving schools. An unknown Clerk's employee referred him to the Clerk's website for additional information relating to available driving schools, but the employee recommended that he use the *American Safety Council* driving school.
- He selected the *American Safety Council* driving school and registered for the Basic Driver Improvement (BDI) course. Shortly after completing his registration, he received an email alert from his *MyIDCare* account where it allegedly stated a criminal complaint, not a traffic citation, was filed against him with the Clerk's office. *MyIDCare* is a service provided by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to former/current federal employees and military personnel. He stated that he is a military veteran.
- His credit card was charged a fee from an unknown vendor shortly after he registered to start the BDI course. After multiple calls and requests for assistance from his credit card company and bank, he said that they were able to determine the charges were related to the *American Safety Council* driving school.
- He had additional documentation to support his allegations to include, but not limited to, email alerts from his *MyIDCare* account, credit card statements, emails from his bank representative, and the *American Safety Council* driving school registration records.

When the OIG asked for the name of the Clerk employee, he stated that he could not remember her name. After the phone interview, the OIG requested a copy of the above-mentioned supporting documentation from the private citizen and provided him with the OIG's contact information. On the same date, April 23, 2021, the OIG sent a follow-up email with a written request for the supporting documentation.

Objective: Our review was to determine the facts of the case, and to ascertain whether the Clerk's employee could be acting inappropriately by routing business to a specific vendor or providing misleading information to the public.

Observations: A review of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle (DHSMV) records confirmed the private citizen also completed a BDI course and received a Traffic School Certificate of Course Completion from the *American Safety Council* driving school in 2019, relating to a previous traffic citation that he received from the Collier County Sheriff's Office.

A review of the Clerk's website regarding traffic citations and the available options for the public showed it provides a wide range of information, guidance, and links to the DHSMV website. A review of the DHSMV website showed it includes a comprehensive list of Florida approved driving schools, and the *American Safety Council* driving school is among the approved Florida BDI course providers. The DHSMV website also provides multiple sources of information to the public.

A company name search using the Better Business Bureau (BBB) website records revealed the *American Safety Council* driving school is a BBB Accredited business since 2008 (over 22 years in business), and they received an "A" rating from the BBB.

Conclusion: Based upon the phone interviews conducted and documents reviewed, information obtained does not support a finding that the Clerk's office or its employees acted unprofessionally nor that they provided misleading guidance/information to the private citizen.

The information the citizen provided during the phone interviews did not support his allegations, and he did not provide any additional information or documentation to the OIG as requested. The OIG closed the preliminary review, and no further action is warranted.

Total # Transactions	Amounts Audited or Reviewed	Questioned Costs	Taxpayer Savings	Recommendations
2	\$506.00	N/A	N/A	N/A