

# Corruption Spikes in Illinois



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The statistics do not completely reflect it, but 2019 was a highly explosive year, during which some of the most important political corruption in the history of Chicago and Illinois was exposed.

Bombshell corruption news reports that year dethroned the city's most powerful alderman, upset Chicago's mayoral election campaign, torpedoed the most powerful and well-known candidate, and threatened the political existence of Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives and Chairman of the State Democratic Party, Michael Madigan.

Almost all of 2019's explosive corruption activity was not captured in the annual statistics compiled by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section because DOJ only reports federal public corruption convictions for the year the convictions occur. Most of the headline grabbing political corruption events of 2019 were reports on investigations, subpoenas, FBI raids, indictments, or other beginning steps in criminal prosecutions. Actual convictions take place at the end of the process, usually a year or more later.

Shown on the cover in the first row from left to right, are: former Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan, Alderman Edward Burke, Alderman Danny Solis; in the second row, left to right, are former State Senators Martin Sandoval and Tom Cullerton (Cover photo layout by Corinne D. Peterson).

## **What the DOJ statistics show**

Nonetheless, the DOJ statistics show that since the department began collecting the data in 1976, Chicago is the most corrupt federal judicial district in the nation, and that Illinois, on a per capita basis, is the third most corrupt state.

Table 1 shows the rankings of the nation's top 15 judicial districts, including their major city, by the total number of public corruption convictions. Since 1976, Chicago had a total of 1,770 convictions and an average of 41 per year, Los Angeles had 1,588 and an average of 37, New York/Manhattan had 1,361 and an average of 32 per year, Miami had 1,234 and an average of 29, and Washington D.C. had 1,199 and an average of 28 per year.

**Table 1:**  
Federal Public Corruption Convictions by Judicial District 1976-2019

<b>Rank for Convictions</b>	<b>District (Major City)</b>	<b>1976-89</b>	<b>1990-99</b>	<b>2000-09</b>	<b>2010-19</b>	<b>1976-2019</b>
1	Illinois-Northern <i>(Chicago)</i>	508	610	367	285	1,770
2	California-Central <i>(Los Angeles)</i>	268	595	383	342	1,588
3	New York-Southern <i>(Manhattan)</i>	550	398	242	171	1,361
4	Florida-Southern <i>(Miami)</i>	108	437	404	285	1,234
5	District of Columbia	239	393	342	225	1,199
6	New Jersey <i>(Newark)</i>	202	264	410	303	1,179
7	Pennsylvania-Eastern <i>(Philadelphia)</i>	291	246	252	270	1,059
8	Ohio-Northern <i>(Cleveland)</i>	173	314	333	186	1,006
9	Virginia-Eastern <i>(Richmond)</i>	189	213	303	391	1,096
10	New York-Eastern <i>(Brooklyn)</i>	308	237	204	130	879
11	Texas-Southern <i>(Houston)</i>	116	205	267	253	841
12	Florida-Middle <i>(Orlando)</i>	159	179	230	203	771
13	Massachusetts <i>(Boston)</i>	193	159	187	188	727
14	Louisiana-Eastern <i>(New Orleans)</i>	117	173	230	177	697
15	California-Eastern <i>(Sacramento, Fresno)</i>	156	203	200	104	663

However, if you look at only the last decade—from 2010 to 2019—Chicago slips to 6th place, tied with Miami, with 285 convictions. Richmond, Virginia is the leader with 391 convictions. It is followed by Baltimore, Maryland with 352, Los Angeles, California

with 342, Newark, New Jersey with 303, and Austin/San Antonio, Texas with 290 (See Table 2).

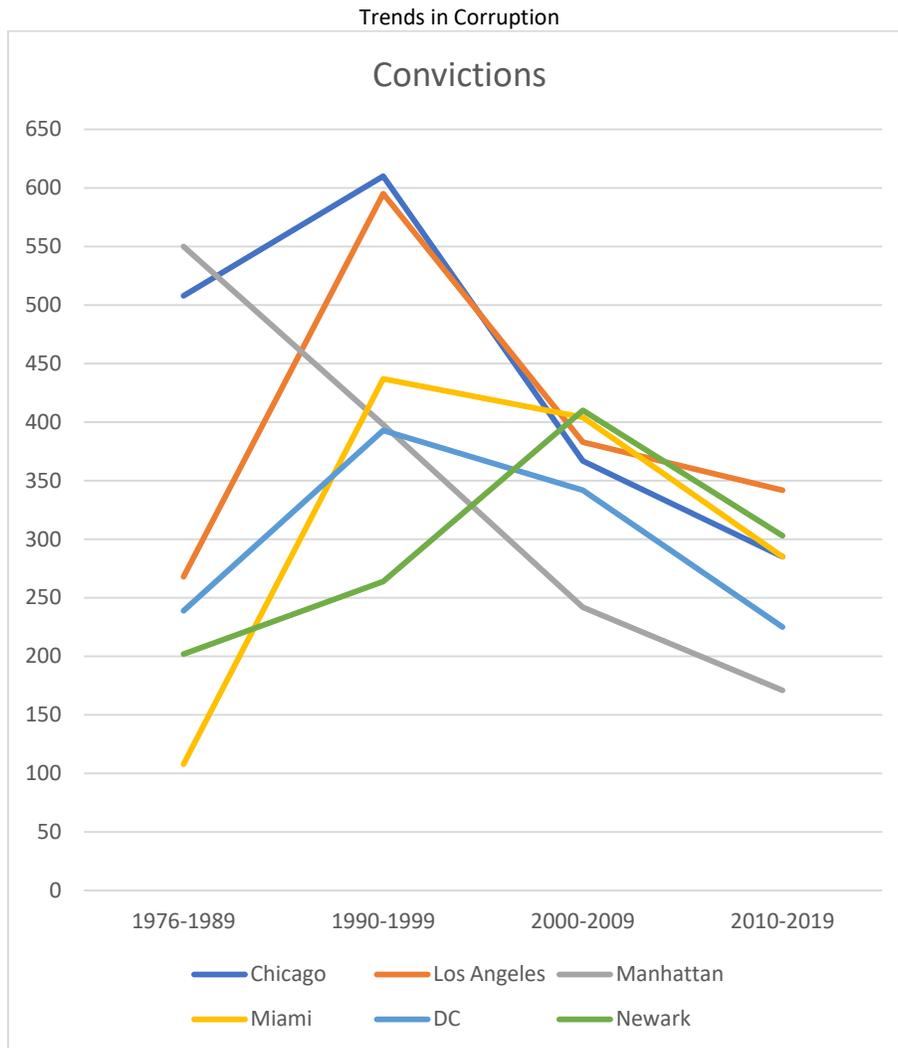
**Table 2:**  
Federal Public Corruption Convictions by Judicial District 2010-2019

<b>Rank for Convictions</b>	<b>District (Major City)</b>	<b>2010-19</b>
1	Virginia-Eastern (Richmond)	391
2	Maryland (Baltimore)	352
3	California-Central (Los Angeles)	342
4	New Jersey (Newark)	303
5	Texas-West (Austin-San Antonio)	290
<b>6*</b>	<b>Illinois-Northern (Chicago)</b>	<b>285</b>
6*	Florida-Southern (Miami)	285
8	Georgia-Northern (Atlanta)	278
9	Pennsylvania-Eastern (Philadelphia)	270
10	Texas-Northern (Dallas)	269
11	Arizona (Phoenix)	263
12	Texas-Southern (Houston)	253
13	District of Columbia	225
14	Florida-Middle (Orlando)	203
15	Massachusetts (Boston)	188

\*The ranking is shared with more than one District.

While the total number of federal convictions for public corruption in most cities has declined beginning in the 1990s, the most pronounced decreases have been in New York/Manhattan and Chicago (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1:**



Federal convictions for public corruption in Illinois totaled 2,152 since the DOJ began collecting the data in 1976. While California, New York, and several other states had more federal public corruption convictions than Illinois, the Prairie State has a much smaller population and thus a higher rate of convictions per capita.

**Table 3:**

Federal Public Corruption Convictions Per Capita  
 Top Thirteen States with Most Convictions 1976-2019

Rank for Convictions Per Capita	State	Convictions 1976-2019	Population 2019	Conviction Per 10,000 Population
1	District of Columbia	1,199	705,749	16.98
2	Louisiana	1,245	4,648,794	2.67
<b>3</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>2,152</b>	12,671,821	<b>1.69</b>
4	Tennessee	1,041	6,829,174	1.52
5	New York	2,953	19,453,561	1.51
6	Pennsylvania	1,877	12,801,989	1.46
7	Virginia	1,203	8,535,519	1.40
8	Ohio	1,568	11,689,100	1.34
9	New Jersey	1,179	8,882,190	1.32
10	Georgia	1,152	10,617,423	1.08
11	Florida	2,280	21,477,737	1.06
12	Texas	2,318	28,995,881	.79
13	California	2,961	39,512,223	.74

## Bombshell Corruption

The DOJ public corruption conviction statistics for 2019 do not come close to capturing the significance of that year’s corruption events. They miss both the large number and the importance of the public officials caught up in the year’s political scandals.

The year 2019 was barely underway, when on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the FBI filed a federal complaint charging Edward Burke, Alderman of the 14<sup>th</sup> Ward and Chairman of the powerful City Council Finance Committee, with attempted extortion. Ald. Burke allegedly used his office to extort business for his law firm in exchange for remodeling permits for a Burger King restaurant in his ward. The complaint revealed that FBI agents had recorded Burke’s telephone conversations for more than 19 months.<sup>1</sup>

Although Ald. Burke was under a cloud of suspicion since his ward and City Hall offices were raided by federal agents at the end of November 2018, neither the public nor Burke’s fellow politicians knew the extent of the trouble he faced. The doubt ended when the FBI filled its complaint.

The next day, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced that Ald. Burke had resigned as Finance Chairman. Emanuel and ordered an audit of the \$100 million-per-year workers compensation program that had been under Burke's control.<sup>2</sup> Two weeks later, Sterling Bay, a major developer behind the proposed the massive Lincoln Yards development, announced that it dumped Burke's law firm as its property tax attorneys.

Then on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the *Chicago Sun-Times* broke the story that Danny Solis, Alderman of the 25<sup>th</sup> Ward and Chairman of the City Council's Zoning Committee, had worn an undercover wire to record more than a dozen conversations with Burke over a two-year period. A week later, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that "Solis agreed to wear the recording device after he was confronted by law enforcement with evidence of his own alleged misdeeds – including seeking sexual services at a massage parlor."<sup>3</sup> The newspaper also reported that Solis was under investigation for soliciting campaign donations from a street-sweeping company that wanted a reduction in its water bill. Solis is currently still cooperating with the federal investigation and to date has not been criminally charged.

On January 29, 2019, the *Sun-Times* reported that it obtained a federal affidavit stating that the FBI secretly recorded Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan trying to get business for his law firm from a developer brought to him by Ald. Solis. The developer wanted to build a hotel in Chinatown and Madigan wanted a new client for his law firm. Madigan's law firm, like Burke's, is known for its successful property tax reduction work. Solis, according to the affidavit, told the developer's associate that "if he works with the speaker, he will get anything he needs for that hotel."<sup>4</sup> Madigan has not been charged and he has said that neither he nor his law firm are under investigation.

However, Madigan had other unrelated legal and political trouble.

In March, Alaina Hampton, filed a federal sexual harassment lawsuit against four entities controlled by Speaker Madigan: the Democratic Party of Illinois, the Democratic Majority, the 13<sup>th</sup> Ward Democratic Organization, and Friends of Michael J. Madigan. Hampton accused Kevin Quinn, a Madigan aide and brother of 13<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Marty Quinn, of sending her a barrage of unwanted messages and phone calls in pursuit of a romantic and sexual relationship. Hampton settled the lawsuit on November 28, 2019 for \$275,000. As a result of the allegation, Madigan fired Kevin Quinn. Madigan also forced the resignation of Tim Mapes, his chief of staff and clerk of the Illinois House, after Mapes was accused of making repeated inappropriate comments to a clerk in the Speakers office and on the House floor.<sup>5</sup>

In May 2019, Federal authorities raided the City Club's offices in the Wrigley Building on Michigan Ave for documents about Commonwealth Edison (ComEd). According to a *WBEZ* report, the raid was executing a subpoena seeking information on political hiring and contracting at Commonwealth Edison and that Michael Madigan was named in the subpoena.<sup>6</sup> Much more of the Madigan-ComEd scheme would unfold in 2020.

### **Additional major corruption in 2019:**

- On July 29<sup>th</sup>, John T. Coli, the former Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 727 and former president of Teamsters Joint Council 25, which represents more than 100,000 members in Illinois and Indiana, pleaded guilty to accepting \$325,000 in cash from CineScape studios. After being indicted in 2017, but before his guilty plea, Coli was permanently expelled from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters by the union's president, James P. Hoffa.<sup>7</sup>

- Three days after Coli's guilty plea, Illinois State Senator Thomas Cullerton (D-Villa Park) was indicted by a federal grand jury for accepting more than \$250,000 in salary and benefits as an organizer for the Teamsters. Cullerton was hired by Coli for a "ghost" job. In the indictment, prosecutors alleged that Cullerton did little or no work for the Teamsters but received the salary and benefits in violation of federal labor law.<sup>8</sup>

- In September, the home of State Senator Martin Sandoval (D-Cicero) was raided by federal law enforcement officials looking for evidence of bribery related to the placement of red-light cameras in suburban municipalities. Sandoval was indicted and pleaded guilty in 2020.<sup>9</sup> He died in December 2020 of Covid-19 complications

- In October, State Representative Louis Arroyo (D-Chicago), who was also a lobbyist, was charged with bribing a state senator to obtain changes in Illinois gambling laws to benefit his client.<sup>10</sup>

- In May, the Chicago police arrested 1<sup>st</sup> Ward Alderman Proco "Joe" Moreno on felony charges of insurance fraud and obstruction of justice. Ald. Moreno had reported that his car missing, but weeks later, police located it in the possession of his former girlfriend. According to the ex-girlfriend, Moreno gave her permission to use the car and then falsely reported it stolen.<sup>11</sup> Moreno, who lost reelection in 2019, was later charged with drunken driving. He was jailed in January 2021 for violating the conditions of his bond.

- In June, federal agents raided the office of 34<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman and Chair of the Council's Budget Committee Carrie Austin. The fact that Ald. Austin was under investigation likely contributed to her failure to retain chairmanship of the Budget Committee.<sup>12</sup>

- Also, in June, former 20<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Willie Cochran was sentenced to one year and a day after he pleaded guilty to federal fraud charges. Cochran admitted to using his ward's activities fund for

personal expenses rather than the fund's intended purpose. From January 2010 until April 2014, Cochran pocketed approximately \$14,285 from the fund.<sup>13</sup>

## **Harvey, Illinois**

Harvey, a city of about 25,000 people, experienced a high level of corruption in 2019 for its small size. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Attorney announced indictments of six defendants in three separate corruption cases.

In the first case, Rommell Kellogg and Corey Johnson, two high-ranking city officials who were also cousins, conspired to extort a local strip club owner. According to the indictment, Kellogg and Johnson were aware that prostitution was occurring at the club. However, instead of reporting it, they threaten to shut the club down if the owner did not make regular payments to them.

In the second case, police officers, Derrick Muhammad and Derrick Moore, were charged with obstruction of justice. According to the indictment, Muhammad and Moore falsified police reports to protect two acquaintances facing firearm charges. The acquaintances, a father and son team, were both felons and could not legally possess firearms. After their car was reported stolen, found, and towed, the father and son learned that the tow company had found a firearm in their car. Upon realizing that the tow company had discovered the firearm, the father and son conspired with the officers to hide the gun's existence.

In the third case, city officials, Donald Luster and Will Wiley, allegedly solicited bribes from the owner of a suburban towing company. According to the indictment, Luster, a private consultant to Harvey and former mayor of Dixmoor, solicited bribes from the towing company, with the promise that the owner would be allowed to lease a parcel of land owned by the city of Harvey. Wiley was to act

as the "bagman" and collect the cash while Luster negotiated the transactions. At the time, neither Luster nor Wiley knew that the tow company owner was cooperating with federal law enforcement.<sup>14</sup>

Two days after the six Harvey indictments were issued, the Cook County Sheriff's Office opened an investigation into vote-buying in Harvey's mayoral election, then underway. After the first day of early voting on February 11, the County Clerk's office began receiving reports of vote-buying. As a result, the Sheriff's office contacted the State's Attorney and dispatched nine suburban police officers to guard polling places on election day and combat potential electioneering. At the time this report was published, all the mayoral candidates have denied that they participated in any plan to buy votes and no candidates has been charged.<sup>15</sup>

## **Chicago Police Department**

On January 17, 2019, three Chicago police officers, who allegedly covered-up the shooting murder of Laquan McDonald, an unarmed seventeen-year-old African American, by Jason Van Dyke, a white police officer, were acquitted of conspiracy and obstruction of justice.

In March 2017, Van Dyke was found guilty of six counts of first-degree murder and sixteen counts of aggravated battery, one for each shot fired at McDonald. The three policemen, Detective David March and officers Joseph Walsh and Thomas Gaffney, had witnessed or reported the shooting. In July 2019, the Chicago Police Board voted to fire the three officers for violating the police code of conduct.<sup>16</sup>

In May 2019, Chicago police officer Corey Deanes was arrested and charged with four felonies of aggravated battery and two misdemeanor battery counts. In 2017 and 2018, Deanes made "inappropriate and non-consensual physical contact with three women on separate occasions."<sup>17</sup>

In August and September 2019, police officers Milot Cadichon and Kevin Tate pleaded guilty to participating in a bribery scheme. The two officers accepted bribes from an attorney referral service in exchange for exclusive information about crash victims and their insurance carriers. The officers received at least \$10,000 in kickbacks from the attorney referral service. Upon conviction, both officers were also fired.<sup>18 19</sup>

In October 2019, two Chicago police officers, Xavier Elizondo and David Salgado, were convicted of fraudulently obtaining search warrants and stealing cash and drugs from properties they searched. The two officers fabricated information to obtain search warrants on people suspected of drug dealing. After entering their homes, the officers would steal drugs and cash and falsify police reports about the searches.<sup>20</sup>

Alison Yohanna, an employee with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability, Yohanna was forced to resign in 2019 for improperly accessing records of officers and falsifying reports. According to the city Inspector General, Yohanna accessed records of family members and a boyfriend, who were Chicago police officers, and made false accusations against coworkers. Once the conduct was discovered, the city attempted to fire Yohanna. She challenged the decision but eventually agreed to resign and was designated ineligible for rehire.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, the most notorious 2019 case of criminal police activity involved former officer Eddie Hicks. In March 2019, a federal jury convicted Hicks on eight counts, including conspiracy to commit racketeering, drug conspiracy, possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute, among other crimes. For years, Hicks had organized a robbery crew of police officers. Using the guise of police investigations, the crew conducted phony drug raids and automobile

stops of suspected drug dealers; the crew then threatened them with arrest, and kept the drugs, weapons, and cash they found.<sup>22</sup>

Corruption and misconduct by police officers and other employees of the Chicago Police Department can be very costly for taxpayers. According to the city’s Law Department, in 2019, Chicago paid \$46,785,000 in settlements and court awards for cases involving police misconduct. This does not include the costs of work on these cases by attorneys and staff of the Law Department.

**Table 4:**  
Payouts by Chicago for Settlements and Court Orders for Police Misconduct, 2019

Type	Payouts	Number of Cases
Settlements	\$20,751,500	110
Court Orders	\$26,034,100	6
Total	\$46,785,600	116

*Source: City of Chicago’s Report on Chicago Police Department 2019 Litigation*

## **Criminal conduct in schools and colleges**

In January 2019, James Hernandez, a former elevator mechanic at the University of Illinois-Chicago, pleaded guilty to federal bribery and conspiracy to commit bribery charges. Hernandez operated a kickback scheme with the owner of Smart Elevators Company, Suzy Martin. Over the years, Martin paid Hernandez at least \$83,530 for directing elevator repairs to her company.<sup>23</sup>

In May, the Executive Inspector General reported that former Southern Illinois University (SIU) President, Dr. Randy Dunn, improperly worked to get the incoming Chancellor Dr. Carlo Montemagno’s daughter and son-in-law hired. Dr. Dunn was also accused of violating SIU's policies when hiring the SIU’s Vice President of Academic Affairs.<sup>24</sup>

In August, Andrew Parro, a title-winning water polo coach for Chicago Public Schools, pleaded guilty to multiple counts of theft and misuse of school property. Parro rented out the school’s pool and

pocketed the payments. Between 2013 and 2016, Parro made nearly \$30,000 off the scheme.<sup>25</sup>

The most significant example of corruption in an education institution, in terms of monetary losses, involved former Vice-Chancellor for City Colleges of Chicago Sharod Gordon. In November 2019, Gordon and seven co-defendants were indicted on charges of federal wire fraud. The indictment alleged that Gordon received bribes and kickbacks in exchange for steering City College contracts to preferred vendors. The indictment seeks to recover approximately \$349,500 in criminally derived proceeds.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, in 2019, Chicago Public Schools’ (CPS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) formed a new Sexual Allegations Unit to bring accountability to the CPS. For years, CPS had or ignored or improperly handled allegations of sexual abuse of students by teachers, coaches, security guards, and other school employees. Previously, only CPS’s Law Department investigated matters related to sexual assault. However, after the public became aware of several grossly mishandled cases, CPS’s inspector general decided to take on the responsibility. The OIG created an inventory of allegations. As Table 5 shows, for the 2019 fiscal year, CPS averaged approximately three sexual assault allegations per school day.

**Table 5:**

Sexual Assault Allegations of CPS Employees Oct. 2018 through June 30, 2019

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Total Cases	51	45	35	44	62	72	42	65	42
Cumulative Cases	51	96	131	175	237	309	351	416	458
Average Cases*	2.32	2.81	2.33	2.77	3.88	3.43	2.80	2.95	3.00

\*Per School Day

Source: Office of Inspector General Chicago Board of Education Annual Fiscal Report 2019

The OIG's findings were obviously disturbing, but Inspector General Nicholas Schuler assured the public that his agency would remain vigilant in addressing the issue. In an interview with *ABC News*, he said, "Once you start figuring out what the numbers are and reporting on them, they will surprise a lot of people. But that's the point... We want to make sure that we are on top of this."<sup>27</sup>

## **An Explanation of the DOJ statistics**

There are limits to understanding corruption through the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section report. First, the DOJ report does not list or describe the individual cases behind the convictions; it does not include federal actions other than convictions, such as criminal investigations, indictments, and sentencing. The annual report also does not include corruption convictions by state and local law enforcement agencies.

To establish a fuller picture of political corruption in Illinois, it is necessary to examine other sources. In addition to the DOJ reports, the authors of this report examined reports from the Illinois Office of the Executive Inspector General, the Inspector General of Chicago, the Inspector General of Chicago Public Schools, and news reports on corruption published in local newspapers and on the web. In Appendix 1 of this report, there is a "day-by-day" account of the incidents of public corruption throughout the state.

Many of the cases that were initiated in 2019 were not completed, not only because these normally take a few years, but also because the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 slowed prosecutions. The courts were closed for much of the year, jury trials were halted, and other matters were handled virtually. For this reason, the authors of this report suspect that the number of convictions in the DOJ's 2020

report will likely show a major drop compared to 2019, along with an increase in convictions in 2021 when the courts fully reopen.

## **Appendix 1**

### **2019 Corruption Day by Day**

**January 3, 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

James Hernandez, a former elevator mechanic at the University of Illinois-Chicago, plead guilty to federal bribery and conspiracy to commit bribery. Hernandez and Suzy Martin, owner of Smart Elevators Company, operated a kickback scheme where Martin paid Hernandez for directing repair services to her company. Martin paid Hernandez at least \$83,530 in kickbacks. In response to the scandal, the Illinois State Office of Executive Inspector General recommended that UIC implement new procedures to ensure services are warranted and actually performed.

Source: [“Investigation Reveals Illegal Kickback Scheme for UIC Elevator Repair” | Illinois Ethics Matters, January 15, 2019](#)

**January 9, 2019**

Indicted

A Lake County grand jury indicted for former State Representative Nick Saur on 12 felony charges for allegedly sharing nude photos of an ex-girlfriend online. In August of 2018, Sauer resigned from his office after his ex-girlfriend reported to law enforcement that Saur had created a fake Instagram account to post sexually explicit of her.

Source: [“Former state Rep. Nick Sauer indicted for allegedly sharing ex's nude photos” | Chicago Sun-Times, January 9, 2019](#)

**March 6, 2019**

Indicted

Six defendants were charged as part of a federal investigation of three separate corruption schemes in Harvey, Illinois. Rommell Kellogg and Corey Johnson, cousins, were charged with conspiracy to commit extortion. The two high-ranking city government officials allegedly

extorted payments from a local strip club owner based on threats that if the owner did not pay, the city would shut down the business. The charges allege that in exchange for payments, city officials allowed the business to operate as a brothel.

Derrick Muhammad and Derrick Moore were charged with obstruction of justice and conspiracy to obstruct justice. Muhammad and Moore were Harvey police officers who allegedly collaborated to falsify police reports to protect acquaintances facing firearm charges.

Finally, Donald Luster and Will Wiley were charged with conspiracy to commit federal bribery. Luster, a private consultant to Harvey, worked with Wiley to solicit bribes from a local owner of a towing company from a nearby suburb. In exchange for the bribe, Luster allegedly provided the entrepreneur with a parcel of land owned by the city.

Source: [“Federal Charges Allege Corruption Schemes by South Suburban Harvey Officials and Associates” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, March 6, 2019](#)

**March 7, 2019**

Reprimand

An Office of Executive Inspector General investigation revealed that Katherine Patti Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge for the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, facilitated the hiring of a relative at the law firm Amari & Locallo. During the relative’s employment, Judge Patti assigned herself to 261 cases where the firm represented a party. The O EIG investigation determined that Judge Patti violated the Property Tax Appeal Board’s policy, but it did not find evidence that she improperly favored the firm. In response to the report, the Board held a counseling session with Judge Patti and agreed to revise its conflicts of interest policies.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 18-01567 Patti](#)

**March 11, 2019**

Indicted

Donald Donagher Jr. was indicted on federal bribery charges. From 2009 to 2016, Donagher Jr., the owner of a debt collection company Penn Credit, allegedly bribed to clerks in the Cook County Circuit Court in exchange for favorable treatment in the awarding of the courts' debts work and sale of indictments. The bribes included campaign contributions to certain clerks' campaign, donations to charities supported by certain clerks, and sponsorships of events hosted by certain clerks.

Source: ["Owner of Debt Collection Service Charged for Corruptly Providing Benefits to Obtain Business from Cook County Circuit Court Clerk's Office" | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, March 11, 2019](#)

**March 12, 2019**

Convicted

A federal jury convicted Eddie Hicks on eight counts, including conspiracy to commit racketeering, drug conspiracy, and possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute. Hicks, a former Chicago police officer, and three other officers organized a robbery crew that targeted suspected drug dealers. Using the guise of legitimate police investigations, the crew conducted phony drug raids and automobile stops of suspected dealers; threatened them with arrest; and then kept the drugs, weapons, and cash they found on the suspects.

Source: ["Federal Jury Convicts Former Chicago Police Officer of Participating in Robbery and Extortion Crew" | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, March 12, 2019](#)

**March 19, 2019**

Fined

The Illinois State Executive Ethics Commission imposed a \$500 fine on Robert Hittmeier for failing to comply with the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. Between December 2013 until December 15, 2016 Hittmeier acted as the Hospital Administrator for the Illinois Department of Human Services. From October 16, 2016 until June 9, 2017, Hittmeier served as a warden with the Illinois Department of Correction. Illinois law requires each executive branch officials to report to the Office of Executive Inspector General any changes in employment that may give them “the authority to participate personally and substantially in the award of State contracts or in regulatory or licensing decisions.” Hittmeier failed to report his employment change.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 19EEC003 Hittmeier](#)

**April 12, 2019**

Indicted

Charles Cui, a real estate developer living in Lake Forest, was indicted on federal bribery charges. Cui allegedly steered private legal work to 14<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Ed Burke in exchange for Burke’s support in granting Cui’s business a permit and creating a \$2 million tax increment plan financing for a Northwest Side redevelopment project owned by Cui’s company.

Source: [“Real Estate Developer Indicted on Federal Bribery Charges in Connection with Northwest Side Redevelopment Project” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, April 12, 2019](#)

**April 8, 2019**

Findings and Recommendations

An Office of Executive Inspector General investigation found that state employees were regularly parking in the Illinois Department of Transportation Emergency Traffic Patrol parking lot near Guaranteed

Rate Field, home of the Chicago White Sox, during games to avoid paying for parking. The investigation found that the free parking privileges were extended to the IDOT employees, Governor's Office staff, and State legislators. In response to the report, the IDOT agreed to end the practice.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 18-01118 Illinois Department of Transportation](#)

**April 15, 2019**

Fined

The Illinois State Executive Ethics Commission fined former Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) employee Mark Doyle for violating the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act's revolving door prohibition. Doyle was responsible for overseeing the closure of state-operated developmental disability and psychiatric care centers and moving the residents of these centers to community-based settings. To assist with closures and transitions, IDHS contracted with Community Resource Associates, Inc. Doyle left his position with the DHS to work as a consultant for a private business, BennBrook, Inc. Doyle submitted a revolving door determination request to the Office Executive of Inspector General but did not disclose that BennBrook was contracting to do work with Community Resource Associates. Doyle was fined \$154,056 for the violation. It was the largest amount ever assessed under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 17EEC003 Doyle](#)

**May 2, 2019**

Findings and Recommendations

An Office of Executive Inspector General investigation revealed that former Southern Illinois University President, Dr. Randy Dunn, improperly negotiated the hiring of incoming Chancellor Dr. Carlo Montemagno's daughter and son-in-law, and that Dr. Dunn violated SIU's policies when hiring a Vice President of Academic Affairs. In

response to the report, UIC did not proceed with the hiring plans of Dr. Dunn. The university also implemented numerous changes to its hiring procedures.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 17-02333 Dunn, Thomas and SIU-C](#)

**May 8, 2019**

Arrested & Charged

Corey Deanes, a police officer with the Chicago Police Department, was arrested and charged with four felonies of aggravated battery and official misconduct, and two misdemeanor counts of battery. From August 28, 2017 to July 13, 2018, Deanes allegedly made “inappropriate and non-consensual physical contact with three women on three separate occasions.

Source: [“Chicago officer arrested, accused of inappropriate physical contact with 3 women” | WGN-TV, May 8, 2019](#)

**May 14, 2019**

Arrested & Charged

Chicago police arrested Chicago 1<sup>st</sup> Ward Alderman Proco “Joe” Moreno on charges of insurance fraud and obstruction of justice. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Moreno reported his car was missing. Weeks later, police located the vehicle. The person in possession of it was a Moreno's former girlfriend of who told investigators he had given her permission to use it. Moreno had lost his reelection campaign, and his term as aldermen ended on May 20, 2019.

Source: [“Chicago alderman accused of lying about car being stolen” | AP News, May 15, 2019](#)

**May 14, 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

Michael Clifton, a former Calumet police officer, pleaded guilty of a misdemeanor and was sentenced to two years of probation after admitting to groping and forcibly kissing a woman while on duty in

2016. Clifton, who retired after the woman sued over the allegations. According to the prosecution, Clifton took advantage of the woman who requested assistance from an assailant who she said beat her.

Source: [“Ex-cop accused of groping avoids jail” | Chicago Tribune, May 14, 2019](#)

**May 30, 2019**

Indicted

Current 14<sup>th</sup> Ward Chicago Alderman Ed Burke was indicted on 14 federal racketeering and bribery charges. Alderman Burke allegedly solicited and extorted private legal work and other benefits from companies and individuals in exchange for permits and favorable legislation. The indictment also alleges that Burke threatened to oppose an admission fee increase to the Chicago Museum because the museum failed to respond to Burke’s inquiry about an internship for a child of one of Burke’s friends.

Source: [“City of Chicago Alderman Indicted on Federal Racketeering and Bribery Charges in Connection with Alleged Corruption Schemes” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, May 30, 2019](#)

**June 13, 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

Donald Schupek, the former president of the village of Posen, Illinois, pleaded guilty to charges of embezzlement. According to the plea agreement, Schupek admitted to directing the village bookkeeper to issue him village checks while serving as village president. From June 2014 to August 2016, Schupek embezzled \$27,000 from the village.

Source: [“Former Village of Posen President Guilty of Embezzlement” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, June 13, 2019](#)

**June 19, 2019**

Investigated

Federal agents raided the ward of 34<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Carrie Austin and removed several boxes of evidence. The investigation included

information on the purchase of her home in the West Pullman neighborhood. To date, no charges have been filed, but Austin was forced out of her position as Chair for the Council's Budget Committee.

Source: ["Fed investigation of Ald. Carrie Austin includes look at her purchase of a West Pullman home" | Chicago Tribune, June 19, 2019](#)

**June 19, 2019**

Indicted

Mario H. Fennoy, an East St. Louis police officer, was indicted for fraudulently collecting overtime pay. According to the indictment, Fennoy claimed to be on patrol while actually hanging out at his home on several incidents. Fennoy is accused of submitting over 50 fraudulent requests for overtime pay, totaling more than 200 hours, from April 2017 to March 2018. In that time, he received a base salary of \$69,382, but after overtime, he received more than \$205,000 in total wages.

Source: ["Officer Accused of Bilking East St. Louis Police Department with Fraudulent Overtime Requests" | USAO-SDIL, Department of Justice, June 19, 2019](#)

**June 20, 2019**

Resigned

An Office of Executive Inspector General investigation found that former Chair of the Illinois Gaming Board, Don Tracey engaged in prohibited political activity when he contributed \$1,000 to Friends of Seth McMillian. The contribution amounted to political activity, which Gaming Board members are prohibited from engaging in while serving. Tracey resigned from his position and the Governor's Office developed a new ethics training for Gaming Board members.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case #18-01946 Tracy](#)

**June 24, 2019**

Sentenced

Former 20<sup>th</sup> Ward Chicago Alderman Willie Cochran was sentenced to one year and a day after he pleaded guilty to federal fraud charges. Former Alderman Cochran operated the “20th Ward Activities Fund,” which purported to raise funds for charitable causes. However, Cochran who had control of the organization’s bank account, used donated funds to pay for his daughter’s tuition, purchase items at his home, and withdraw cash at a casino. From January 2010 to April 2014, Cochran pocketed approximately \$14,285 from the organization.

Source: [“Former City of Chicago Alderman Sentenced to a Year in Prison for Using Charitable Funds to Pay Personal Expenses” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, June 24, 2019](#)

**July 17, 2019**

Resigned

Alison Yohanna, an employee with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability, was forced to resign for improperly accessing records of officers and falsifying reports. According to the city Inspector General’s report, Yohanna accessed records of family members and a boyfriend who were Chicago police officers and falsely accused coworkers of plotting against it. An investigation from the city inspector general recommended firing Yohanna, but she agreed to resign and was designated ineligible for rehire.

Source: [“Police misconduct investigator forced out after accessing cops’ investigative records” | Chicago Tribune, July 17, 2019](#)

**July 30, 2019**

Sentenced

Marlon P. Bush, the former director of the East St. Louis public library, was sentenced for embezzling thousands of dollars from the library. From 2014 through 2016, while serving as the library’s director, Bush took an excessive salary for himself, stole from another

library employee's salary, and charged numerous personal purchases to the library's credit cards. Bush was sentenced to 12 months in prison and ordered to pay \$48,102.86 in restitution to the library.

Source: ["Former Director of East St.Louis Library Sentenced" | USAO-SDIL, Department of Justice, July 30, 2019](#)

**August 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

Andrew Parro, a title-winning water polo coach in Whitney Young, a Chicago Public School plead guilty to multiple counts of theft and misuse of school property. As a swim coach, Parro organized a scheme where he rented out the school pool to outside organizations and then pocketed the payments for the "rentals." Between 2013 and 2016, Parro made nearly \$30,000 off the illicit rental scheme.

Source: ["High school swim coach in Chicago illegally rented out pool, is now charged with theft" | Chicago Tribune, January 6, 2020](#)

**August 2, 2019**

Indicted

Illinois State Senator Thomas Cullerton was indicted for allegedly fraudulently receiving a salary and benefits from Teamsters Local Union 734, a labor union he did not do work for. According to the indictment, Senator Cullerton was a member of Teamsters Local Union 734 prior to being elected to office as a state senator. After his election in November 2012, Senator Cullerton was no longer an eligible participant in Local 734's health and pension funds, however, the president of Teamsters Joint Council 25 hired Cullerton as a purported union organizer. From March 2013 to February 2016, Cullerton received \$188,320 in salary, bonuses, and cellphone and vehicle allowances, as well as approximately \$64,068 in health and pension contributions, obtained approximately \$21,678 in reimbursed

medical claims from the union, despite doing little to no work for the organization.

Source: [“Illinois State Senator Indicted for Allegedly Fraudulently Receiving Salary and Benefits from Labor Union” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, August 2, 2019](#)

**August 23, 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

Milot Cadichon, a Chicago police officer, pleaded guilty to bribery, after admitting to accepting at least \$10,000 in kickbacks from the owner of a west suburban attorney referral service. Since 2015, Cadichon accepted bribes from the referral service in exchange for exclusive information about crash victims and their insurance carriers. Cadichon was fired from the Chicago Police Department and sentenced in November 2019.

Source: [“Chicago cop pleads guilty to taking bribes for accident victim information” | Chicago Tribune, August 23, 2019](#)

**September 20, 2019**

Pleaded Guilty

Kevin Tate, a Chicago police officer, pleaded guilty to bribery, after admitting to accepting at least \$10,000 in kickbacks from owner of a west suburban attorney referral service. Since 2015, Tate accepted bribes from the referral service in exchange for exclusive information about crash victims and their insurance carriers. Tate was the second officer to plead guilty to the scheme. After the conviction, Tate was fired from the Chicago Police Department and sentenced in early 2020.

Source: [“Veteran Chicago cop pleads guilty to bribery for leaking details on crash victims to attorney referral service” | Chicago Tribune, September 20, 2019](#)

**September 24, 2019**

Investigated

Federal law enforcement raided State Senator Martin Sandoval's home and seized \$9,720. The investigators were looking for evidence that SafeSpeed had landed contracts with local municipalities through bribery. Sandoval was the chair of the Illinois Senate's Transportation Committee and had tremendous sway over transportation funding and legislation. Sandoval resigned in January of 2020 and died of COVID19 in December of 2020.

Source: ["Documents show feds were after evidence of bribery and theft from federally funded program in raid of state Sen. Martin Sandoval's office" | Chicago Tribune, October 2, 2019](#)

**September 26, 2019**

Investigated

Federal law enforcement agents raided the village halls of the southwest suburbs of McCook and Lyons. The two suburbs are Democratic Party strongholds and known for the history of corruption and nepotism. The law enforcement agents left with records. When this report was printed why the village halls were raided was unknown.

Source: ["Federal agents raid McCook, Lyons village halls" | WGN-TV, September 26, 2019](#)

**October 4, 2019**

Resigned

An Office of Executive Inspector General investigation found that Alan Lowe, the director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, had improperly loaned out the Gettysburg Address and other Lincoln artifacts to conservative media outlet Mercury One for \$50,000. In exchange for loaning the materials, Lowe and the Michael Little, the chief operating officer for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum received a free trip to Texas from the organization. During the investigation, the Office of Executive

Inspector General discovered that Little had sought to work for Mercury One after leaving is government employment and intentionally interfered with an EIGa revolving door violation investigation. After release of the findings, both Lowe and Little resigned and the Governor appointed new board members to the library and museum.

Source: [OEIG Final Report Case # 19-00300 Lowe and Little](#)

**October 8, 2019**

Subpoenaed

Federal authorities subpoenaed the suburb Schiller Park for records about the \$5,000-per-month lobbying contract the municipality had with retired 23<sup>rd</sup> Ward Chicago Alderman Michael Zalewski. The village hired Zalewski in December of 2018 and fired him in August of 2019. The firing came days after U.S. Attorney Office issued a grand jury subpoena to investigate Zalewski for possible corruption.

Source: [“Former Alderman's Lobbying Deal Is Latest Target in Widening Federal Investigation” | Better Government Association, October 8, 2019.](#)

**October 22, 2019**

Convicted

Two Chicago police officers, Xavier Elizondo and David Salgado, were convicted of fraudulently obtaining search warrants and stealing cash and drugs from properties they searched. The two Chicago police officers were assigned to a gang team in the Chicago Police Department’s Tenth District. The two officers conspired to obtain search warrants on false information to enter various properties to seize cash and drugs. The officers would then steal the items and falsify police reports on their searches.

Source: [“Two Chicago Police Officers Convicted of Fraudulently Obtaining Search Warrants and Obstructing Justice” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, October 22, 2019](#)

**October 28, 2019**

Indicted

State Representative Louis Arroyo was charged with bribery for allegedly offered monthly payments of \$2,500 to a state senator in exchange for favorable legislation for his client, VSS Inc. Besides his State job, Arroyo managed a lobbying firm, Spartacus 3 LCC, which also lobbied the Chicago City Council for a sweepstakes ordinance on behalf of VSS. Unlike regular slot machines, sweepstakes machines are not regulated by the Illinois Gaming Board.

Source: [“State Rep. Luis Arroyo charged with bribery” | Crain’s Chicago Business, October 28, 2019](#)

**November 20, 2019**

Indicted

Sharod Gordon, a former Vice-Chancellor for City Colleges of Chicago, and seven co-defendants were indicted on federal wire fraud charges. The indictment alleges that Gordon received bribes, including kickbacks, in exchange for steering City Colleges’ contracts to preferred vendors. The indictment seeks to recover approximately \$349,500 in criminally derived proceeds from Gordon and seven co-defendants.

Source: [“Federal Indictment Charges Former Vice Chancellor of City Colleges of Chicago with Devising Procurement Fraud Scheme” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, November 20, 2019](#)

**November 29, 2019**

Settlement

Political consult Alaina Hampton settled her sexual harassment lawsuit with the Democratic Party of Illinois, the Democratic Majority, the 13th Ward Democratic Organization, and Friends of Michael J. Madigan for \$275,000. Hampton had alleged that in 2016 and 2017, she was sexual harassed by Kevin Quinn, an aide to then Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan. Kevin Quinn is a brother of the

13<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Marty Quinn. The lawsuit alleged that Hampton was hindered from advancing in the speaker's organization after reporting on Quinn.

Source: [“Consultant settles sexual harassment lawsuit involving ex-Madigan aide” | Chicago Sun-Times, November 29, 2019](#)”

**December 12, 2019**

Sentenced

Beena Patel, a former associate clerk for the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, was sentenced to two years in prison for lying under oath to a federal grand jury. Patel was found guilty of lying to the grand jury on three different matters. First, Patel lied about selling campaign fundraiser tickets and knowing other employees did the same on behalf of Clerk Dorothy Brown. Second, Patel denied having recent conversations with another Clerk’s Office employee who had previously loaned \$15,000 to a company associated with Clerk Brown and her husband. Finally, Patel falsely denied contacting the Clerk’s Chief of Staff regarding a promotion opportunity for an employee whose brother had donated \$10,000 to the Brown’s election campaign.

Source: [“Former Associate Clerk in Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County Sentenced to Two Years in Prison for Lying to Federal Grand Jury” | USAO-NDIL, Department of Justice, December 12, 2019](#)

**December 17, 2010**

Subpoenaed

A federal grand jury subpoenaed information relating to Cook County Assessor Joe Berrios and three campaign committees: 31<sup>st</sup> Ward Democratic committee, and Friends of Berrios committee, and the Mexican American Political Action Committee. Subpoena asked for information about contributions to Berrios’ retirement party and his access to private planes and boats.

Source: [“Cook County Assessor Joe Berrios under federal investigation” | Chicago Sun-Times, December 17, 2019](#)

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