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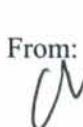
**Office of the Inspector General
Miami-Dade County**

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Mayor Alex Penelas
Miami-Dade County

The Honorable Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler, Chair
and Members of the Board of County Commissioners

The Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, Clerk of the Court

From:  Christopher Mazzella, Inspector General
Inspector General

Date: October 22, 2004

Re: Todd L. Nelson – Former Records Specialist, Office of the Recorder,
Clerk of the Courts

Attached is a news release relating to former Clerk's Office employee, Todd L. Nelson, who pled guilty yesterday to charges of Grand Theft and Official Misconduct.

Nelson claimed to have been serving as a juror on a Federal trial for approximately six months. His ruse defrauded the Miami-Dade County of \$17,388.47 in salary and benefits that was paid to him while absent from his County job. After repeated requests by supervisors to provide documentation of his jury service, Nelson returned to work and subsequently submitted his resignation.

Nelson pled guilty to all charges and was placed on probation with the requirement that he pay the County restitution and the OIG costs of investigations. Prior to entering the plea, Nelson submitted cashier's checks for the full restitution amount and an additional check to the OIG in the amount of \$1,000 as costs of investigation.

The Clerk of the Courts, which cooperated fully in the investigation, initially referred this matter to the OIG.

cc: Mr. George Burgess, County Manager
Mr. Robert Ginsburg, County Attorney
Ms. Ricky Schechtman, Senior Deputy Clerk

Clerk of the Board (copy filed)



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

NEWS RELEASE

Former County Employee Enters Plea on Charges of Official Misconduct and Grand Theft

A former County employee who falsely claimed to be on Federal jury service for a six months period, while collecting a County paycheck, pled guilty yesterday to one (1) count of Grand Theft and one (1) count of Official Misconduct.

Following an investigation by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Todd Lorin Nelson, (Nelson) age 33, was charged by the State Attorney's Office with Grand Theft and Official Misconduct due to his continued absence from employment at the Office of the County Recorder, Miami-Dade Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts. Nelson, employed with the Clerk's Office since 1990, held the position of Court Records Specialist until his resignation on October 8, 2003.

Prior to his resignation, Nelson had successfully lied to supervisors about serving on a Federal Jury. Although summoned, Nelson was never required to appear and did not in fact appear for jury service in Federal Court. Nelson provided a copy of the summons for jury service beginning April 7, 2003 to his supervisors, and then advised them that he had been selected on a panel to hear a case.

He did not report back to work until September 29, 2003, one week short of six months from when he first stated he had been selected as a juror in a Federal trial. During the entire time Nelson was absent from work, his supervisors and co-workers thought he was serving on a jury. He repeatedly told supervisors that he would provide documentation of his jury service at the conclusion of the trial. Nelson dropped by the office during what co-workers believed to be lunch breaks to pick up his pay stubs. When asked by a curious co-worker about the case, Nelson replied he could not talk about it because "a man's life was at stake." On October 8, 2003, after repeated requests to provide proof of jury service, Nelson faxed a resignation letter.

Nelson pled guilty to both charges and was sentenced by the Court to adjudications on both convictions and was placed on two years probation with the condition that he not seek public employment while on probation. Prior to entering the plea, Nelson paid a total of \$17,388.47 in restitution to the County, representing salary and benefits paid to him during the scheme, and \$1,000 to the OIG to cover partial reimbursement for investigative expenses.

Inspector General Christopher Mazzella expressed his appreciation to the Clerk's Office for bringing this matter to the attention of the OIG and for cooperating fully in the investigation.