

February 19, 2013

Detroit's inspector general's office officially in operation to field complaints

Detroit — The city's Office of Inspector General — the agency charged with rooting out waste, abuse, fraud and corruption in city government — is officially in operation, officials said.

The inspector general's office — which is supposed to ensure honesty and integrity in city government — is now operating at the Cadillac Tower in downtown Detroit. People can make complaints in person, through telephone or online.

James Heath began work as the inspector general last summer. Since then, the office secured office space, hired staff and purchased software to perform operations. It has been accepting complaints, but it has not publicized what it was doing to residents or employees.

"You only get one chance to make a good impression, (and) we wanted to make sure that when complaints started coming in in earnest, we were able to handle them efficiently and effectively," Heath said in a statement.

Mayor Dave Bing and Council President Charles Pugh are also supportive, officials said.

"The ability for people to report abuse, misuse or misconduct anonymously is going to have a major impact on curtailing the pockets of corruption we've wanted to get rid of for quite some time," Pugh said in a statement.

The office can be reached on a hotline at (313) 964-TIPS or on the web at www.detoig.org. It has a link for a secure reporting form.

dnichols@detnews.com