



NEWS

From the Office of the New York State Inspector General
Joseph Fisch

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DMV Clerk Violated Privacy Protection Act in Personal Spat

A former state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) employee was referred for prosecution after she accessed an adversary's vehicle data during a private dispute, according to a report released today by state Inspector General Joseph Fisch.

Debbie Mitchell, 38, of Albany, used her state computer to obtain information, in violation of the Federal Drivers Privacy Protection Act and DMV policy, because she believed a woman had scratched her car with a key and repeatedly slammed into her car door, the report states. Once she had the data, Mitchell used it to file a damage claim with her adversary's insurance company.

DMV employees are granted electronic access to New York State drivers' information for official business only. Mitchell, a state worker since 2004 earning \$25,900, resigned in February for reasons unrelated to the investigation.

The Inspector General forwarded his findings against Mitchell to the Albany County District Attorney's office for possible prosecution and to the New York State Commission on Public Integrity for a potential violation of the state Public Officers Law, which states that state employee cannot disclose confidential information acquired at work to further his or her personal interests.

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