



# CITY OF HOUSTON

Mayor's Office

Interoffice

Correspondence

To: Darian Ward  
Employee No. 136405  
Sr. Staff Analyst (Executive Level)  
C.D. Date: 10/06/2008

From: Alan Bernstein  
Assistant Director

Date: 12/11/17

Subject: Temporary Suspension

Ms. Ward, you have been employed with the City of Houston (COH) since October 6, 2008. You are currently serving as a Senior Staff Analyst, Executive Level, in the Mayor's Communications Office.

On October 20, 2017, a Texas Public Information Act (TPIA) request was received from a Journalist asking for copies of all emails sent from your COH email address on the topics dealing with Joy in Motion, Joy in Motion Productions, and/or other non-city work-related topics and reply to those emails. The Journalist included an example in the request and gave the time frame from February 1, 2014 to October 20, 2017.

In our discussion, you said you would produce all emails responsive to the request and you also acknowledged that Joy in Motion Productions is your own private company. You did reply to the requester on November 15, 2017 and stated that you had located 30 documents. You copied me on your response. In addition, you apprised the Mayor's Chief of Staff Marvalette Hunter that the request produced 30 pages.

I discussed the request again with you and you showed me copies of the 30 pages you had produced. The only email that appeared to be responsive to the request was the same one the journalist had cited as an example. The others appeared to be emails related to city business. Your explanation was that providing more documents than were needed merely to demonstrate to the requester that the request produced only one relevant email.

To ensure the accuracy of your reply to the requester and we are in compliance with TPIA, an email system search was requested by me and conducted by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Ms. Ward, your email account produced approximately 5,000 emails related to Joy in Production entity or other personal, non-city business matters over the three (3) year period from February 2014 to October 2017.

The emails included proposals to, and signed agreements with, film and TV production companies for their consideration of your personal business ideas for "reality shows." Some of the brochures attached to these e-mails contained the photograph and bio of your co-worker, listing the individual as a "consulting producer" for the proposed series. The emails also included an intense and sustained promotional and developmental campaign over the four years on behalf of a charitable foundation. Ms. Ward, you identified yourself as a board