



## State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

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### **Former Memphis Police Association President Pleads Guilty to Theft Following Comptroller Investigation**

The former president of the Memphis Police Association (MPA) pleaded guilty last week to Theft of Property over \$10,000 from the nonprofit organization he once led.

Thomas Turner was indicted in March of 2009 following an investigation by the Comptroller of the Treasury's Division of Municipal Audit and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

The investigation determined that, between November 1, 2004 and July 1, 2007, while an active member of the Memphis Police Department and president of the Memphis Police Association, Turner used several deliberate and intentional schemes to misappropriate more than \$26,000 from the association.

The Comptroller's investigative audit report found that:

- Turner diverted an American Express credit card refund intended for the MPA in the amount of \$5,996 to his own personal bank account.
- He used an association check in the amount of \$4,403 to pay on his personal American Express account.
- Turner also sought reimbursement from MPA for nearly \$6,000 of expenditures that he

never actually incurred.

- Mr. Turner also unlawfully kept approximately \$5,859 in proceeds from the association's Hester-Sykes Softball Tournament for his own personal benefit.
- A refund check from Godwin, Morris, Laurenzi and Bloomfield in the amount of \$2,878 intended for the MPA was diverted by Turner into his personal bank account.
- And, on at least four occasions, he purchased items using funds from the association, only to later return the items and keep the refunds totaling \$1,169 for his own personal benefit.

Turner was placed on three years of probation and ordered to pay approximately \$19,259 in restitution to the Memphis Police Association after previously repaying nearly \$7,000 to the association. After Turner entered his guilty plea in Shelby County Criminal Court, he was placed on judicial diversion, which will allow him to expunge his record in three years after all the conditions of the plea agreement have been met.

The costs of the audit, which were more than \$35,000, were not ordered as part of Turner's restitution. Turner previously entered into an agreement with MPA to only pay back the \$19,000 he stole that was still outstanding; leaving the substantial audit bill unpaid by the association.

"It is extremely disappointing whenever someone entrusted to enforce our laws is responsible for breaking them, as was the case with Mr. Turner," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "I hope this case will clearly illustrate that no one, not even law enforcement officers, is above the law. I also want to thank our auditors and investigators from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the fine work they have done on this case."

"Public officials and employees in this state should be held to a higher standard than that of the average citizen," says Dennis Dycus, Director of Municipal Audit. "It is sad that a police officer,

someone whom the community should be able to respect and look up to, could commit such an intentional and deliberate crime.”

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