

BEFORE THE CITY OF ATLANTA
BOARD OF ETHICS

In the Matter of:)
)
 Pamela Lockett) Case No. CO-14-015
)
 Respondent)
)

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter came before the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics for a decision on October 23, 2014, prior to a probable cause determination. Having considered the attached settlement agreement, the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics approves the agreement and orders that Respondent Pamela Lockett pay a total fine of \$1,500 in monthly installments of \$100, which must be paid in full by December 31, 2015, for her violations of section 2-811 of the City's Code of Ethics. The first payment of \$100 is due to the City of Atlanta on August 15, 2014.

So ordered this 23rd day of October, 2014.

For the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics



Caroline Johnson Tanner
Chair, Board of Ethics

**BEFORE THE CITY OF ATLANTA
BOARD OF ETHICS**

In the Matter of:)	
)	
Pamela Lockett)	Case No. CO-14-015
)	
Respondent)	
)	

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This settlement agreement is made between Nina R. Hickson, the Ethics Officer for the City of Atlanta, and Pamela Lockett, a former city employee charged with violating the Code of Ethics.

The parties agree and consent to the following terms to resolve this matter prior to an enforcement hearing before the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics. The Board of Ethics is responsible for administering, implementing, and enforcing the Standards of Conduct contained in the Atlanta Municipal Code.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Pamela Lockett is a former Customer Services Representative who was assigned to the Customer Call Center with the Department of Public Works. Lockett worked for the City from July 2001 until June 2014.
2. On August 29, 2012, the Ethics Office received an anonymous complaint alleging that employees Pamela Lockett and Mernena Henderson were using city property and services to make illegal General Educational Development ("GED") Certificates and City of Atlanta pay stubs. According to the complaint, Lockett and Henderson sold the documents to city employees and citizens.
3. On September 5, 2012, the Ethics Office forwarded the complaint to the Department of Law's Compliance Unit for review and investigation. The Compliance Unit's investigation found that on several separate occasions Lockett and Henderson created, sold and distributed fraudulent documents, including, but not limited to GED Certificates; high school diplomas; and check stubs.
4. During the course of the Compliance Unit's investigation, Lockett admitted to creating and printing out fraudulent GEDs and pay stubs during work hours utilizing her city-owned computer and city resources. Lockett stated that she operated her business under the name "Malone's Total Solutions." Lockett also told investigators that she charged on average \$30-\$40 per GED and \$75 for pay stubs.

5. On June 25, 2014, after reviewing the Compliance Unit's investigative report, the Ethics Office initiated an ethics complaint against Lockett alleging that she violated section 2-811 of the Code of Ethics when she created, sold and distributed fraudulent documents, including, but not limited to GED Certificates, high school diplomas, and check stubs while on city time using city property and equipment for the private advantage of herself and others.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

6. Pamela Lockett is a former city employee who as a Customer Services Representative was subject to the Code of Ethics found in section 2-801 to 2-824 in the City's Code of Ordinances.
7. Section 2-811 of the Code of Ethics states: "No official or employee shall request, use or permit the use of any publicly owned or publicly supported property, vehicle, equipment, labor or service for the private advantage of such official or employee or any other person or private entity."
8. The use of city property, equipment, labor or services for private gain is a violation of section 2-811.
9. Lockett used city property, equipment, labor and services for her private advantage when she used her city-assigned computer and city-owned printer on city time to create and print fraudulent GED certificates, pay stubs and high school diplomas for her personal profit and for the private benefit of the individuals who received the documents.

PENALTY

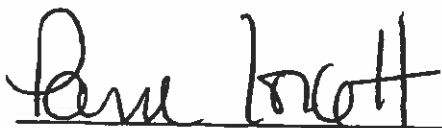
10. In proposing a penalty, the Ethics Office has considered both mitigating and aggravating circumstances. As aggravating circumstances affecting the penalty, Lockett violated section 2-811 on several separate occasions when she created the fraudulent documents.

AGREEMENT


11. Lockett acknowledges that she violated the city's ethical standards by using city property and equipment on city time to create and print fraudulent GED certificates, pay stubs and high school diplomas for the private advantage of herself and others.
12. She agrees to pay the City of Atlanta a civil penalty of \$1,500, and will pay in monthly installments of \$100 from personal funds beginning on August 15, 2014. The assessed fine must be paid in full by December 31, 2015.
13. The parties agree to enter this settlement agreement to resolve all factual and legal issues raised in this matter and to reach a final disposition without the

necessity of an evidentiary hearing before the Board to determine Respondent's liability.

- 14. The Respondent understands and voluntarily waives all procedural rights under the Code of Ordinances, including the right to personally appear before the Board, subpoena witnesses to testify, confront and cross-examine all witnesses, and have the Board hear the matter at any enforcement hearing.
- 15. The Respondent acknowledges that this agreement is not binding on any other law enforcement or governmental agency and does not preclude the Board of Ethics from referring this matter to, cooperating with, or assisting any other law enforcement or government agency on this or any other related matter.
- 16. The Ethics Officer will submit this settlement agreement for consideration by the Board of Ethics at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and the Board must enter an order approving the agreement before it becomes the final decision and order in the case.
- 17. The parties agree that this agreement shall become null and void in the event that the Board refuses to accept it. The Respondent further agrees that no member of the Board of Ethics or its staff shall be disqualified from participating in any hearing before the Board because of prior consideration of this settlement agreement.
- 18. The failure of Respondent to comply with this agreement may result in initiation of an enforcement action for violation of its terms.



Pamela Lockett
Respondent



Date



Nina R. Hickson
Ethics Officer



Date