



Office of the MTA Inspector General
Daniel G. Cort



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‘THEY CAN’T DO NOTHING TO US’: LIRR EMPLOYEES MANUFACTURED, SOLD, AND USED CLONED SWIPE CARDS TO GET PAID WHILE NOT WORKING

MTA Inspector General Daniel G. Cort announced today the results of a nearly three-year investigation that uncovered a “culture of fraud and time abuse” at three Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) facilities that included the use of duplicate ID cards to swipe colleagues in or out when they were not present. These so-called cloned cards were made using machines bought on Amazon and sold to colleagues for prices ranging from \$5 to \$40. A total of 36 employees – including seven supervisors with the title of gang foreman – committed various acts of misconduct at the Ronkonkoma, Richmond Hill, and West Side locations, the Office of the MTA Inspector General (OIG) found.

One gang foreman warned employees not to discuss the cards, saying, “What happens at K.O. [Ronkonkoma] stays at K.O.” Another gang foreman responded, “they can’t do nothing to us.”

Many of the employees openly engaged in time abuse. In one egregious display of misconduct, a gang foreman swiped in for a weekend overtime shift wearing a bathing suit and flip flops and told employees he supervised, “Don’t bother looking for me. I’ll be next to my pool with a margarita.”

LIRR received OIG’s report in June 2025 and took swift action against the active employees, taking nearly all out of service without pay and handing down unpaid suspensions ranging from two to nine months for those who waived administrative trials. Three employees were also demoted. Of the 36 total employees covered by the report, 12 have resigned or retired, including eight who did so after disciplinary charges had been filed against them. The agency told OIG that it implemented several fraud-prevention measures, including biometric scans for timekeeping and additional cameras.

“These employees, including supervisors who should have been enforcing the rules, stole countless hours of paid time. The investigation revealed a widespread lack of ethics and contempt for the timekeeping regulations in these LIRR facilities.” said IG Daniel Cort. “I hope that our investigation and the serious punishments handed down by LIRR management will help combat the culture of corruption that has festered for too long at these facilities.”

OIG's investigation began in October 2022 with an anonymous complaint that a Ronkonkoma gang foreman, called Gang Foreman 1 in the report, possessed a duplicate ID card and was not on the Ronkonkoma property when he was swiped in by another gang foreman.

The investigation revealed a total of five gang foremen and eight other employees at Ronkonkoma who were involved in timekeeping fraud. The cover-up at that facility included blaming the cloned card distribution on a deceased colleague. Gang Foreman 1 was the subject of two OIG reports in 2024 (MTA/OIG Reports [#2024-13](#) and [#2024-14](#)), and he resigned while discipline was pending.

At Richmond Hill, 18 employees, including two gang foremen, engaged in similar time abuse. An employee there told OIG that he was instructed to make cloned cards and threatened with lost overtime shifts if he refused. One Richmond Hill employee left work early, and also during his shift, to go to the gym. OIG found that he entered the gym 198 times while still on the clock for his shifts.

At West Side, another five employees were also found to be stealing time.

The misconduct at the various facilities included:

- Employees using cloned or authentic LIRR cards to swipe each other in and out at time clocks at the start and/or end of their shifts to make it appear as though they had worked a complete tour.
- Employees regularly leaving their worksites for extended periods of time in the middle of their shifts.
- Employees leaving early nearly every day — including one at Ronkonkoma who would rush through his work, a practice deemed the “rip and slip.”
- Employees selling the cards — many of which were stashed in unlocked lockers and a refrigerator on LIRR property — for as much as \$40.00 (one employee performed work on another's vehicle in exchange for a card).
- Employees creating the cards in a locker room and inside personal cars on LIRR property.

None of the implicated employees fully cooperated with OIG's investigation.

[Click here to read the report](#), which includes a complete breakdown of the discipline imposed by LIRR. This report is part of a broad investigation involving time abuse at LIRR facilities, which included reports published in [May](#) and [June](#) 2025. OIG notes that the re-establishment of biometrics and other measures implemented by LIRR, such as increased supervision and attendance checks, are a positive step, but the risk of fraud persists and LIRR supervisors must remain vigilant.

The MTA Inspector General encourages all members of the public to reach out to report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse at any of the MTA agencies.

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