

## INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated an investigation after receiving allegations that non-public FTC information — specifically, an internal memorandum authored by an FTC employee — had been leaked to a media outlet. Although the OIG’s investigation initially focused on this single alleged disclosure, it expanded significantly as additional reports of unauthorized disclosures surfaced.

Over a 2-year period, the OIG assessed 23 potential leaks involving nonpublic FTC information that appeared in or was known to media publications. To determine whether unauthorized disclosures occurred and, if so, to identify potential sources, the OIG conducted extensive investigative activities. These included reviews of documents and data; enterprise-wide email searches; interviews with current FTC employees;<sup>1</sup> technical analysis of metadata and communication patterns; and, when appropriate, subpoenas or formal requests for records.

The OIG evaluated whether and how the unauthorized disclosures occurred and attempted to identify any responsible individuals. The investigation identified patterns suggesting that (a) certain leaks may have coincided with leadership transitions or public policy debates and (b) that one publication consistently reported more detailed information. In some cases, information published in the press could only have originated from within the FTC; in others, the reported information was too general or mirrored publicly available material, preventing the OIG from determining whether an unauthorized disclosure had occurred. Ultimately, the OIG did not identify any individual as responsible for an unauthorized disclosure.

The OIG also notes that it has not received any substantiated reports of unauthorized disclosures since mid-September 2025.

The matter is closed with no findings of individual misconduct.

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<sup>1</sup> One senior FTC official was not employed by the FTC when the OIG contacted them for an interview. That senior official declined our interview request. The OIG has the authority to compel testimony from current FTC employees upon informing them that their statements will not be used to incriminate them in a criminal proceeding. The OIG does not have the authority to compel or subpoena testimony from former FTC employees.