

## Former BPD super says he was demoted for investigating alleged detail fraud

Marcus Eddings was put in charge of uncovering detail and OT fraud



A suit filed in Superior Court claims that BPD Commissioner Michael Cox cautioned against further internal fraud investigation. (Libby O'Neill/Boston Herald)

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A Boston Police deputy superintendent is suing the department, the city, and Police Commissioner Michael Cox over a demotion he claimed was motivated by his investigation of alleged detail fraud.

Marcus Eddings, a 29-year-veteran of the force, filed the lawsuit in Suffolk Superior Court Monday.

Eddings had been promoted to superintendent, overseeing the Paid Detail and Court Units, in 2019. After finding numerous incidents of alleged detail fraud, Eddings said in his filing that leadership, including Cox, cautioned him against continuing his investigation. Against those wishes, the then-superintendent continued to pursue fraud and

filed several written reports. This, he claimed, led Cox to order Eddings' demotion in January of 2024 to deputy superintendent.

Department spokesperson Sgt. Det. John Boyle declined to comment on the pending litigation on Tuesday. But in a follow-up email from BPD chief of internal and external communications Mariellen Burns on Wednesday, she wrote that the commissioner "has the sole authority to appoint members of his or her command staff. Historically, the commissioner has removed members of the command staff and replaced them immediately or over time. Such decisions are made by the commissioner based on the needs of the Department and the ability of people to meet those needs."

Although she noted BPD does not normally comment on the specifics of active lawsuits against them, she wrote, "it is important to note that the Boston Police Department investigates all allegations of misconduct. There is a well established process for investigating internal and external allegations. This would include allegations of the abuse of time or details referenced in the lawsuit."

"Any suggestion otherwise is untrue," she added.

Eddings is asking for a jury to try the case. He is seeking to be reinstated as superintendent damages including back pay and legal fees.

His lawyers argued in the complaint that Eddings' was "unlawfully demoted" and that he should have been protected from adverse action under the Massachusetts Whistleblower Act. The law is meant to shield protected employees who report or disclose activity that is unlawful.

According to the filing, after Eddings became a superintendent, he was charged with rooting out overtime and detail fraud. Subsequently, he led an internal investigation into detail pay that he claimed uncovered 639 violations involving 43 officers. The complaint stated that of the 43 officers accused of wrong doing, 20 were referred to the department's Anti-Corruption Division and 25 others were referred to internal affairs.

When the then-Superintendent Eddings brought his findings to Cox, the complaint alleged that the commissioner said further investigation would "cause another 'black eye' for the Department and that Cox did not want to mess up his legacy."

Eddings said in his filing that he was also told by a different BPD official that the department could not realistically fire a large number of officers accused of fraud.

None of the named defendants in the complaint, the city, the police department, nor the commissioner, have filed an answer in court to Eddings suit.

“Marcus Eddings is a highly credentialed and respected officer who has dedicated his entire career to faithfully serving the city of Boston,” Eddings’ lawyer Jack Bartholet told The Herald over the phone Monday afternoon. The complaint shows that Eddings is committed to “the rule of law above all else,” Bartholet added, saying he was looking forward to “keenly proving the merits of these claims” in court soon.