

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan Mercer County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022

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June 2023



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General

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**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018  
Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General  
Twitter: @PAAuditorGen  
www.PaAuditor.gov**

**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Board of Township Supervisors  
South Pymatuning Township  
Mercer County  
Sharpsville, PA 16150

We have conducted a compliance audit of the South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (Act 205 of 1984, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.402(j)), which requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to audit every municipality which receives general municipal pension system state aid and every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system state aid is deposited. The audit was not conducted, nor was it required to be, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We planned and performed the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

The objective of the audit was to determine if the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objective identified above. To determine whether the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, our methodology included the following:

- We determined whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements by verifying the annual deposit date of state aid and determining whether deposits were made within 30 days of receipt for all years within the period under audit.

- We determined whether annual employer contributions were calculated and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by examining the municipality's calculation of the plan's annual financial requirements and minimum municipal obligation (MMO) and comparing these calculated amounts to amounts actually budgeted and deposited into the pension plan as evidenced by supporting documentation.
- We determined that there were no employee contributions required by the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations for the years covered by our audit period.
- We determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the plan member who retired and the plan member who separated employment and received a lump-sum distribution during the current audit period represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and were properly determined and disbursed in accordance with the plan's governing document, applicable laws, and regulations by recalculating the amount of the monthly pension benefits due to the retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipients.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2019, and January 1, 2021 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2020, and 2022 respectively, in accordance with Act 205 and whether selected information provided on these reports is accurate, complete, and in accordance with plan provisions to ensure compliance for participation in the state aid program by comparing selected information to supporting source documentation.

The South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan participates in the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS), which is an agent multiple-employer public employee retirement system that acts as a common investment and administrative agent for participating municipal pension plans. PMRS issues a separate Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, copies of which are available from the PMRS accounting office. PMRS's financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

Township officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. As previously described, we tested transactions, interviewed selected officials, and performed procedures to the extent necessary to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance with legal and regulatory requirements or noncompliance with provisions of contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies that are significant within the context of the audit objective.

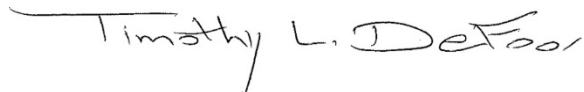
The results of our procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, except as noted in the following findings further discussed later in this report:

Finding No. 1 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Underpayment Of State Aid

Finding No. 2 – Inadequate Accounting/Reporting Over Activity Of The Pension Plan

The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis. We did not audit the information or conclude on it and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of South Pymatuning Township and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank township officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



Timothy L. DeFoor  
Auditor General  
June 9, 2023

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## BACKGROUND

On December 18, 1984, the Pennsylvania Legislature adopted the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (P.L. 1005, No. 205, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.101 et seq.). The Act established mandatory actuarial reporting and funding requirements and a uniform basis for the distribution of state aid to Pennsylvania's public pension plans.

Annual state aid allocations are provided from a 2 percent foreign (out-of-state) casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign (out-of-state) fire insurance tax designated for paid firefighters and any investment income earned on the collection of these taxes. Generally, municipal pension plans established prior to December 18, 1984, are eligible for state aid. For municipal pension plans established after that date, the sponsoring municipality must fund the plan for three plan years before it becomes eligible for state aid. In accordance with Act 205, a municipality's annual state aid allocation cannot exceed its actual pension costs.

In addition to Act 205, the South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes including, but not limited to, the following:

Act 15 - Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law, Act of February 1, 1974  
(P.L. 34, No. 15), as amended, 53 P.S. § 881.101 et seq.

The South Pymatuning Township Police Pension Plan is a single-employer cash balance pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No.1-2003, and a separately executed plan adoption agreement with PMRS, adopted pursuant to Act 15. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the township and its police officers. The plan was established August 27, 2001. Active members are not required to contribute to the plan. The municipality is required to contribute 10 percent of compensation. As of December 31, 2022, the plan had three active members and two retirees receiving pension benefits.

SOUTH PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 1 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Underpayment Of State Aid**

Condition: The township failed to certify an eligible police officer and understated payroll by \$29,445 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2021. The data contained on this certification form is based on prior calendar year information.

Criteria: Pursuant to Act 205, at Section 402(e)(2), an employee who has been employed on a full-time basis for at least six consecutive months and has been participating in a pension plan during the certification year is eligible for certification.

Cause: There was a turnover of municipal officials and the township lacked adequate internal control procedures to timely identify the omission during 2021.

Effect: The data submitted on this certification form is used, in part, to calculate the state aid due to the municipality for distribution to its pension plans. Because the township’s state aid allocation was based on unit value, the township received an underpayment of state aid, as identified below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Units Understated</u>	<u>Unit Value</u>	<u>State Aid Underpayment</u>
2021	2	\$ 4,797	\$ 9,594

Although the township will be reimbursed for the underpayment of state aid due to the certification error, the full amount of the 2021 state aid allocation was not available to be deposited timely and therefore resulted in the township having to make additional municipal contributions in order to meet the plan’s funding obligation for 2021.

Recommendation: We recommend that in the future, plan officials establish adequate internal control procedures, such as having at least two people review the data certified, to ensure compliance with the instructions that accompany Certification Form AG 385 to assist them in accurately reporting the required pension data.

Management’s Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception.

Auditor’s Conclusion: Compliance will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.

SOUTH PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding No. 2 – Inadequate Accounting/Reporting Over Activity Of The Pension Plan**

Condition: The municipality’s accounting/reporting system did not provide effective control over the transactional activity of the pension plan during the year 2022. Municipal officials were unable to furnish annual financial statements or custodial account statements summarizing the financial activity of its pension plan.

Criteria: An adequate system of accounting and record keeping is a prerequisite for sound administration of pension plans. In addition, assets held in a custodial account for the purpose of plan management are to be governed by the terms and provisions of the account contract, provided that the terms and provisions of the contract are within the parameters of all prevailing pension legislation. Although the municipality may contract with a trustee to administer the financial management of the plan, the fiduciary responsibility for the plan remains with the municipality.

Cause: Municipal officials did not maintain a separate detailed accounting of pension plan transactions which, among other things, helps assure the production of proper financial statements to effectively monitor the annual activity of the pension plan. Additionally, municipal officials indicated that the plan’s custodian failed to provide copies of the custodial account transaction statements summarizing activity of the pension plan account for the year 2022.

Effect: Although we were able to obtain alternate documentation from the municipality to evidence the propriety of individual transactions tested during performance of the audit, the failure to maintain annual financial and/or account transaction statements prohibits municipal officials from effectively monitoring the plan’s financial operations and could lead to undetected errors or improprieties in account transactions.

Recommendation: We recommend that municipal officials establish and maintain a financial accounting and reporting system that allows the municipality to effectively monitor the plan’s financial operations, even in the absence of statements from the plan custodian. Municipal officials should refer to the Auditor General’s Bulletin No. 2-88 entitled “Preparation, Maintenance and Auditability of Financial Records,” for further guidance in establishing adequate accounting and record-keeping procedures. In addition, we recommend that municipal officials contact the plan custodian and obtain annual financial statements of the custodial account for its pension plan for the year 2022 to ensure the accuracy and propriety of the transaction activity.

Management’s Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception.

Auditor’s Conclusion: It was noted that the plan custodian went through a substantial upgrade to the plan administration software and implemented a new accounting system. The modernization process, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, resulted in unforeseen delays in the year-end reporting process for financial statements and GASB 68 reports. The custodian expects 2022 financial reports to be distributed before the end of 2023. Compliance with the finding recommendation will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.



SOUTH PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	Statutorily Required Contribution (SRC)*	Contributions in Relation to the SRC*	Contribution Deficiency (Excess)**	Covered- Employee Payroll***	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered- Employee Payroll***
2014	\$ 10,948	\$ 10,948	\$ -	\$ 108,883	10.1%
2015	15,490	15,491	(1)	154,106	10.1%
2016	15,016	8,867	6,149	149,358	5.9%
2017	15,869	15,910	(41)	158,101	10.1%
2018	13,103	11,849	1,254	138,505	8.6%
2019	4,816	4,816	-	46,759	10.3%
2020	9,848	9,848	-	97,681	10.1%
2021	20,705	20,705	-	165,993	12.5%
2022	20,795	20,886	(91)		

\* The Statutorily Required Contribution (SRC) is a contribution amount based upon the payroll and the contribution rate as outlined under the terms of the cash balance pension plan as reported by the township.

\*\* The SRC and the Contributions in Relation to the SRC were provided by PMRS. Deviation between these amounts may be due to contributions to or transfers from the municipal reserve account.

In 2016, the township met the plan's \$15,006 funding requirement through the deposit of \$8,829 in state aid, \$38 in employer contributions and \$6,149 in terminated employee forfeitures (*the \$15,016 SRC included \$10 for subsequent administrative expense*).

In 2018, the township met the plan's funding requirement through the deposit of \$11,849 in employer contributions and allocation of \$1,274 in terminated employee forfeitures (*the additional \$20 contribution was paid towards administrative expense*).

\*\*\* Due to the timing of this audit, covered-employee payroll for 2022 was not provided in this schedule.

SOUTH PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Joshua D. Shapiro**

Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

**Mr. Matthew Chalupka**

Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors

**Mr. Keith McKnight**

Secretary

**Mr. Richard Cardamone, CPA, CGMA**

Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://www.PaAuditor.gov). Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: [news@PaAuditor.gov](mailto:news@PaAuditor.gov).