
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

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News for Immediate Release

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Auditor General DeFoor Refers Fire Relief Audit to Centre County District Attorney After Finding Nearly \$26,000 in Missing Funds

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Timothy DeFoor announced he has referred a recent audit that found \$25,910 missing from the Gregg Township Firemen’s Relief Association’s savings account to the Centre County District Attorney’s office.

“I’ve asked the District Attorney’s office to take a closer look to determine whether any laws were violated,” DeFoor said. “Due to the seriousness of this matter, my department will withhold state aid from the association until we have answers.”

The [audit](#) found 18 savings account withdrawals took place between March 14, 2019, and Nov. 3, 2020, in amounts ranging from \$310 to \$2,500. The audit noted that although state law requires the signatures of two association officers for such transactions, only the group’s treasurer had signed off.

Association officials could not explain why the funds were withdrawn or provide bank records to auditors.

The audit also had seven other findings:

- Expenditures totaling \$40,066 for which adequate supporting documentation was not provided, including payments to association members and various vendors;
- Failure to maintain bond coverage;
- Failure to maintain minutes of meetings, inadequate minutes of meetings;
- Inadequate signatory authority for checks issued;
- Inadequate documentation of income;
- Inadequate financial record-keeping system; and
- Noncompliance with prior audit recommendation involving failure to maintain a complete and accurate equipment roster.

Volunteer firefighter relief associations (VFRAs) are separate legal entities from the fire departments they support. The Gregg Township Firemen’s Relief Association is affiliated with, but is legally separate from, the Gregg Township Fire Company.

The Department of the Auditor General distributes state aid for VFRAs and audits how they use the funds, which are generated by a 2% tax on fire insurance policies sold in Pennsylvania by out-of-state companies.

In 2021, \$54 million went to 2,517 municipalities for distribution to VFRAs to provide training, purchase equipment and insurance, and pay for death benefits for volunteer firefighters.

VFRAs risk having future state aid withheld if they do not comply with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Review the [Gregg Township Firemen's Relief Association audit report](#) and learn more about the Department of the Auditor General online at www.paauditor.gov.

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