

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Donegal Township Police Pension Plan Washington County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2020

March 2022



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



**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
Donegal Township
Washington County
West Alexander, PA 15376

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Donegal Township Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2020. 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 whether annual employee contributions were calculated, deducted, and deposited into the pension plan in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by testing total members' contributions on an annual basis using the rates obtained from the plan's governing document in effect for all years within the period under audit and examining documents evidencing the deposit of these employee contributions into the pension plan.
- We determined that there were no benefit calculations prepared for the years covered by our audit period.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2017 and January 1, 2019 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2018 and 2020, 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 Donegal 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 Donegal 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 Donegal 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 – Failure To Deposit The Full Amount Of State Aid Into An Eligible Pension Plan

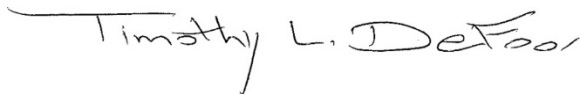
Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In A Net Overpayment Of State Aid

Finding No. 3 – Inadequate Accounting/Reporting Over Activity Of The Pension Plan

Finding No. 4 – Late Filing Of Actuarial Valuation Reports

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 Donegal 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy L. DeFoor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
February 23, 2022

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background	1
Findings and Recommendations:	
Finding No. 1 – Failure To Deposit The Full Amount Of State Aid Into An Eligible Pension Plan.....	2
Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In A Net Overpayment Of State Aid.....	3
Finding No. 3 – Inadequate Accounting/Reporting Over Activity Of The Pension Plan	4
Finding No. 4 – Late Filing Of Actuarial Valuation Reports.....	5
Potential Withhold of State Aid.....	7
Supplementary Information	8
Report Distribution List	12

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 Donegal 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 Donegal Township Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 2016-1 as amended, effective January 1, 2016, and a separately executed plan agreement with the plan custodian 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 October 10, 1969. Active members hired prior to December 1, 2014 are required to contribute 2 percent of their compensation. Active members hired on or after December 1, 2014 shall contribute 5 percent of their compensation. As of December 31, 2020, the plan had 2 active members, 2 terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and no retirees receiving pension benefits.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 1 – Failure To Deposit The Full Amount Of State Aid Into An Eligible Pension Plan

Condition: The municipality did not fully deposit the amount of its 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021 state aid allocations into an eligible pension plan in accordance with Act 205. The municipality received its state aid allocations in the amounts of \$40,023, \$36,576, \$42,599, and \$45,234, on September 20, 2018, September 18, 2019, March 2, 2021, and September 28, 2021, respectively; however, as of the date of this report, only state aid totaling \$119,220 was actually deposited into the township's pension plans.

Criteria: Section 402(g) of Act 205 states, in part:

. . . the total amount of the general municipal pension system State aid received by the municipality shall, within 30 days of receipt by the treasurer of the municipality, be deposited in the pension funds or the alternate funding mechanisms applicable to the respective pension plans.

Cause: The township experienced turnover in administrative personnel responsible for the pension plan and as such, plan officials assuming plan responsibilities were unaware of applicable Act 205 provisions regarding the deposit of the state aid.

Effect: When state aid is not deposited into a pension plan account, the funds are not available to fund pension obligations, expenses or for investment and the risk of misapplication is increased.

Furthermore, the township's future state aid allocations may be withheld until the finding recommendation is complied with.

Recommendation: We recommend that the municipality deposit its remaining state aid allocation of \$44,835 (*\$45,212 outstanding less the \$377 required to be returned to the Commonwealth disclosed in Finding No. 2*), plus interest earned during the period beyond the 30 day grace period allowed by Act 205, compounded annually into an eligible pension plan. A copy of the interest calculation must be maintained by the township for examination during our next audit of the plan.

We also recommend that the township develop and implement procedures to ensure that future state aid is deposited into an eligible pension plan within 30 days of receipt by the municipal treasurer in accordance with Act 205.

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

Auditor's Conclusion: Due to the potential withhold of state aid, the township's compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the plan.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In A Net Overpayment Of State Aid

Condition: The township failed to certify an eligible police officer (2 units) and understated total payroll by \$32,013 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2018. In addition, the township certified an ineligible police officer (2 units) and overstated payroll by \$14,257 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2021. The data contained on these certification forms is based on prior calendar year information.

Criteria: Pursuant to Act 205, at Section 402(e)(2), in order to be eligible for certification, an employee must have been employed on a full-time basis for at least six consecutive months and must have been participating in a pension plan during the certification year. In addition, pursuant to the instructions that accompany Certification Form AG 385, the total payroll eligible to be certified should be Internal Revenue Service Form W-2 earnings pertaining to full-time positions.

Cause: As indicated earlier in this report, the township experienced turnover in administrative personnel responsible for the pension plan and additionally, the township lacked adequate internal control procedures, such as having another individual review the accuracy of the data certified, to ensure compliance with Act 205.

Effect: The data submitted on these certification forms 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 pension costs in 2018, the township was entitled to an allocation of \$41,704. As a result, the township received an underpayment of state aid in the amount of \$1,681 in 2018. Conversely, the township's state aid allocation for 2021 was originally based on pension costs in the amount of \$45,234. However, based on the corrected information, the township was entitled to an allocation based on unit value of \$43,176. As a result, the township received a total net overpayment of state aid in the amount of \$2,058 in 2021.

Recommendation: We recommend that the net overpayment of state aid, in the amount of \$377, plus interest, be returned to the Commonwealth. A check in this amount, with interest compounded annually from date of receipt to date of repayment, at a rate earned by the pension plan, should be made payable to: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and mailed to: Department of the Auditor General, Municipal Pension & Fire Relief Programs Unit, 321 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. A copy of the interest calculation must be submitted along with the check.

We also 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.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

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

Auditor's Conclusion: The township's compliance with the finding recommendation will be monitored subsequent to the release of the audit report and through our next audit of the pension plan.

Finding No. 3 – 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 police pension plan during 2020. 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 2020.

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 2020 to ensure the accuracy and propriety of the transaction activity.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 3 – (Continued)

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

Auditor's Conclusion: It was noted that the plan custodian recently 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. In addition, the custodian has taken active measures to resolve these issues and anticipates distribution of the 2020 reports and statements for their plans the last week of March and completion of the 2020 financial reporting this summer. Finally, the custodian expects 2021 financial reports to be distributed before the end of 2022. Compliance with the finding recommendation will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.

Finding No. 4 – Late Filing Of Actuarial Valuation Reports

Condition: Actuarial valuation reports, Form Type C, for the police pension plan, with valuation dates of January 1, 2017 and January 1, 2019, were not submitted to the Municipal Pension Reporting Program (MPRP) by the March 31, 2018 and March 31, 2020, deadlines, as required by Act 205. The actuarial valuation reports were not received by MPRP until April 17, 2018 and May 7, 2020, respectively.

Criteria: Section 201(a) of Act 205 states, in part:

Each municipality which has established or maintains a pension plan for its employees, including any municipality which participates in the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System, shall cause to be made actuarial valuation reports. Actuarial valuation reports shall be made biennially, unless the applicable municipality is applying or has previously applied for supplemental State assistance pursuant to Section 603, whereupon actuarial valuation reports shall be made annually.

Furthermore, Section 201(b) of Act 205 states, in part:

The biennial actuarial valuation report required pursuant to subsection (a) shall be made as of the beginning of each plan year occurring in an odd-numbered calendar year and shall be filed with the executive director of the commission no later than the last business day of March occurring in the following calendar year.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 4 – (Continued)

In addition, Section 204 of Act 205 provides:

If a complete actuarial valuation report or experience investigation is not filed in a timely fashion, any and all financing which is provided to the municipality by the Commonwealth and is dedicated for pension plan purposes shall be withheld until the report or investigation is filed.

Finally, Section 402(e)(7) of Act 205 states, in part:

Any municipality which has not filed with the commission on a timely basis, pursuant to the applicable municipal pension plan actuarial reporting law, an actuarial report for each of the municipal pension plans which it has established or maintains shall be entitled to receive as general municipal pension system State aid, at such time as compliance with the actuarial reporting requirement occurs, the adjusted amount of general municipal pension system State aid per unit

Cause: Due to turnover in administrative personnel responsible for the pension plan, the actuarial valuation reports were not timely submitted because officials assuming plan responsibilities were not familiar with Act 205 filing deadlines.

Effect: Due to the late filing of the 2019 actuarial valuation report, the municipality's 2020 state aid was withheld until the necessary report was filed and state aid, in the amount of \$42,599, was not released until March 2, 2021, 154 days after the release of state aid to those municipalities who submitted their reports by the filing deadline. Consequently, the municipality did not have its state aid available to use for pension obligations, expenses and investment opportunities.

Recommendation: To ensure that future actuarial filing deadlines are met in a timely manner and to improve pension plan administration, we recommend that the township develop and implement internal control procedures, such as a calendar listing the various reporting and filing deadlines required by Act 205, including the actuarial valuation report filing date.

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.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
POTENTIAL WITHHOLD OF STATE AID

A condition such as that reported by Finding No. 1 contained in this audit report may lead to a total withholding of state aid in the future unless that finding is corrected. However, such action will not be considered if sufficient written documentation is provided to verify compliance with this department's recommendation. Such documentation should be submitted to: Department of the Auditor General, Bureau of Municipal Pension & Liquor Control Audits, 314 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS

Historical trend information about the plan is presented herewith as supplementary information. It is intended to help users assess the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis, assess progress made in accumulating assets to pay benefits when due, and make comparisons with other state and local government retirement systems.

The actuarial information is required by Act 205 biennially. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2015, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Accrued Liability (AAL) - Entry Age (b)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability (b) - (a)	Funded Ratio (a)/(b)
01-01-15	\$ 523,584	\$ 293,714	\$ (229,870)	178.3%
01-01-17	600,950	396,124	(204,826)	151.7%
01-01-19	679,511	469,883	(209,628)	144.6%

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

The comparability of trend information is affected by changes in actuarial assumptions, benefit provisions, actuarial funding methods, accounting policies, and other changes. Those changes usually affect trends in contribution requirements and in ratios that use the actuarial accrued liability as a factor.

Analysis of the dollar amount of the actuarial value of assets, actuarial accrued liability, and unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability in isolation can be misleading. Expressing the actuarial value of assets as a percentage of the actuarial accrued liability (Column 4) provides one indication of the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis. Analysis of this percentage, over time, indicates whether the system is becoming financially stronger or weaker. Generally, the greater this percentage, the stronger the plan.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

<u>Year Ended December 31</u>	<u>Actuarially Determined Contribution</u>	<u>Actual Contributions</u>	<u>Contribution Deficiency (Excess)</u>	<u>Covered- Employee Payroll*</u>	<u>Contributions as a Percentage of Covered- Employee Payroll*</u>
2014	\$ -	\$ 2,180	\$ (2,180)	\$ 91,272	2.39%
2015	5,492	5,532	(40)	109,102	5.07%
2016	16,541	16,561	(20)	103,485	16.00%
2017	-	3,853	(3,853)	129,225	2.98%
2018	-	-	-	94,646	0.00%
2019	-	(19)	19	96,393	-0.02%
2020	-	-	-	-	

* Due to the timing of this audit, covered-employee payroll for 2020 was not provided in this schedule.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES
(UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the supplementary schedules was determined as part of the actuarial valuation at the date indicated. Additional information as of the latest actuarial valuation date follows:

Actuarial valuation date	January 1, 2019
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	N/A
Remaining amortization period	N/A
Asset valuation method	The Actuarial Value of Assets equal the sum of all audited reserve funds as of the valuation date, including Member, Municipal, Retired, Disability, and DROP Reserves, when applicable, and a one year administration expense reserve, plus the portion of any additional investment income to be distributed as excess interest, based on PMRS Policy Statement 05-2. This asset valuation is based on the unique legislative structure of PMRS and the administrative rules adopted by the PMRS Board in conjunction with Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law. ¹

Actuarial assumptions:

Investment rate of return *	5.25%, compounded annually, net of investment and administration expenses
Projected salary increases *	2.8%-7.05%
* Includes inflation at	2.8%
Cost-of-living adjustments	2.8% per year, subject to plan limitations

¹ The administrative rules adopted by the PMRS Board, which are not subject to comply with Actuarial Standards of Practice (ASOP), when defining the Actuarial Value of Assets (AVA), does not necessarily meet the requirement of ASOP 44 Selection and Use of Asset Valuation Methods for Pension Valuations. The AVA provided within this report follow the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law and the PMRS policy statement.

DONEGAL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mr. Jim Bauer
Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors

Ms. Heather Wood
Secretary

Ms. Cynthia Cranmer, CPA
Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at 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.