

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Washington Township Non-Uniformed Pension Plan Fayette County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2020

August 2021



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Board of Township Supervisors
Washington Township
Fayette County
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We have conducted a compliance audit of the Washington Township Non-Uniformed 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 whether retirement benefits calculated for the plan member who retired 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 pension benefits due to the retired individual and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipient.
- 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.
- We determined whether provisions of the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) were in accordance with the provisions of Act 205 by examining provisions stated in the plan's governing documents.

The Washington Township Non-Uniformed 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 Comprehensive Annual 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 Washington Township Non-Uniformed 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,

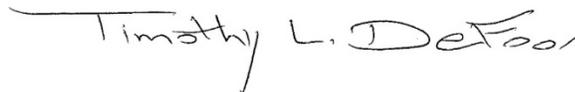
interviewed selected officials and performed procedures to the extent necessary to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance with legal and regulatory requirements or noncompliance with provisions of contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies that are significant within the context of the audit objective.

The results of our procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the Washington Township Non-Uniformed 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 The Pension Plan
- Finding No. 2 – Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Overpayment Of State Aid
- Finding No. 3 – Failure To Maintain An Adequate Record-Keeping System To Effectively Monitor 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 Washington 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

July 27, 2021

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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 Washington Township Non-Uniformed 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 Washington Township Non-Uniformed Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 04-01, as amended, adopted pursuant to Act 15. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the township and its non-uniformed employees. The plan was established March 16, 1988. Active members are required to contribute 4.5 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2020, the plan had 2 active members, 1 terminated member eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 2 retirees receiving pension benefits.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Condition: The municipality did not deposit the full amount of its 2020 state aid allocation into the pension plan. The municipality received its 2020 state aid allocation in the amount of \$54,162, but, as of the date of this report, only state aid totaling \$37,551 was deposited into the pension plan.

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 full amount of the 2020 state aid was not deposited into the pension plan because municipal officials were unaware of applicable Act 205 provisions. Municipal officials stated that they were unaware that they could deposit above and beyond the required minimum municipal obligation in a defined benefit pension plan.

Effect: When state aid is not deposited into a pension plan account, the funds are not available to pay operating 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 after the township reimburses the Commonwealth for the overpayment of state aid received in 2020 as recommended in Finding No. 2, the township deposit the remaining 2020 state aid allocation in the amount of \$11,687, plus interest earned during the period beyond the 30 day grace period allowed by Act 205, compounded annually, into the non-uniformed pension plan. A copy of the interest calculation must be submitted to this Department in addition to the evidence of the deposit.

We also recommend that plan officials 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.

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 report and through our next audit of the plan.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Condition: The township certified 1 ineligible non-uniformed employee (1 unit) and overstated payroll by \$58,584 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2019 and certified 1 ineligible non-uniformed employee (1 unit) and overstated payroll by \$59,508 on the Certification Form AG 385 filed in 2020. The data contained on this certification form is based on prior calendar year information. The ineligible employee retired effective April 1, 2018, and entered the township’s Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP).

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.

Furthermore, Act 205 at Section 402(e)(2) states, in part:

For the purpose of computing and reporting the applicable number of units, a DROP participant shall not be reported to the Auditor General as an active employee.

Cause: Plan officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure the accuracy of the data certified. In addition, plan officials were unaware that DROP participants and their compensation are not eligible for certification.

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. The township’s 2019 state aid allocation was based on pension costs. Therefore, the township received an overpayment of state aid in 2019 in the amount of \$3,831 as identified below:

Year	Normal Cost	Payroll Overstated	State Aid Overpayment
2019	6.54%	\$ 58,584	\$ 3,831

The township’s 2020 state aid allocation was based on unit value. Therefore, the township received an overpayment of state aid in 2020 in the amount of \$4,924 as identified below:

Year	Units Overstated	Unit Value	State Aid Overpayment
2020	1	\$ 4,924	\$ 4,924

The total overpayment of state aid for the years 2019 and 2020 is \$8,755.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 2 – (Continued)

Recommendation: We recommend that the total excess state aid, in the amount of \$8,755, 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.

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 plan.

Finding No. 3 – Failure To Maintain An Adequate Record-Keeping System To Effectively Monitor Activity Of The Pension Plan

Condition: The township's record-keeping system did not provide effective control over the transactional activity of the non-uniformed pension plan during 2019 and 2020. Municipal officials were unable to furnish annual financial statements or custodial account transaction statements for the non-uniformed pension plan. These annual financial and account statements have historically been provided by the plan's custodian, PMRS. However, as of the date of this report, annual financial and accounting statements summarizing the pension account activity have not been provided for the years 2019 and 2020.

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.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding No. 3 – (Continued)

Cause: Municipal officials indicated that the plan’s custodian, PMRS, failed to provide copies of the custodial account transaction statements summarizing activity of the pension plan account for the years 2019 and 2020. In addition, 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.

Effect: Although we were able to obtain alternate documentation from the municipality to evidence the propriety of the individual transactions tested during performance of the audit for the years 2019 and 2020, the failure to maintain annual financial and/or account transaction statements prohibits municipal officials from effectively monitoring the plan’s financial operations. Additionally, inadequate monitoring of the pension plan account could lead to undetected errors or improprieties in account transactions as well as deficiencies in authorizing and implementing pension plan policies and procedures.

Recommendation: We recommend that municipal officials contact the plan custodian and obtain annual financial statements of the custodial account of the non-uniformed pension plan for the years 2019 and 2020 to ensure the accuracy and propriety of the transaction activity. In addition, we recommend that municipal officials establish and maintain a financial record-keeping 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.

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

Auditor’s Conclusion: PMRS officials have indicated that PMRS has recently gone through a substantial upgrade to the plan administration software and implemented a new accounting system. The modernization process, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in unforeseen delays in the 2019 and 2020 years-end-reporting process for financial statements and GASB 68 reports. PMRS officials also indicated that they are taking active measures to resolve these issues and will provide the outstanding reports as soon as the issues are resolved. PMRS officials most recently indicated that they began providing 2019 Year-End Financial Activity Reports and Annual Member Statements and anticipate the process of completing and distributing reports for all of their plans will be completed by this fall, at which time they will transition to 2020 reports and statements. Compliance with the finding recommendation will be evaluated during our next audit of the plan.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED 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.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED 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	\$ 585,035	\$ 815,189	\$ 230,154	71.8%
01-01-17	644,465	829,826	185,361	77.7%
01-01-19	693,891	901,552	207,661	77.0%

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED 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.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED 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	\$ -	\$ 1,988	\$ (1,988)	\$ 139,248	1.43%
2015	347	1,003	(656)	123,469	0.81%
2016	320	3,594	(3,274)	143,252	2.51%
2017	42,526	42,526	-	147,876	28.76%
2018	42,526	42,526	-	117,761	36.11%
2019	37,535	41,223	(3,688)		
2020	37,551	37,551	-		

* Due to the timing of this audit, covered-employee payroll for 2019 and 2020 was not provided in this schedule.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED 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	Level dollar for plan bases and an average for Aggregate Gain/Loss, 10% of surplus is credited against aggregate cost where applicable.
Remaining amortization period	7 years
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.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mr. Charles E. Yusko
Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors

Mr. James Scott Hileman
Vice-Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors

Ms. Janice Amoroso
Township Supervisor

Ms. Amy Naulty
Secretary-Treasurer

Ms. Cynthia Cranmer, CPA
Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System

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