
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF THE **AUDITOR GENERAL** FACT SHEET



Pennsylvania Department of Aging Performance Audit Fact Sheet

Background

We [audited the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's \(PDA\) oversight of the Commonwealth's 52 Area Agencies on Aging \(AAAs\)](#). The audit covered the period from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and had two objectives:

- Determine if PDA properly monitored AAAs investigations of elder abuse and mistreatment; and
- Ensure AAAs protective services staff met the minimum training requirements under the law and regulations.

What did the audit find?

Auditors found weaknesses within PDA's oversight of the AAAs. The audit had 10 findings:

- **Finding 1** – PDA's monitoring process does not effectively assess risk or detect when older adults are left at risk of harm and mistreatment.
- **Finding 2** – PDA's follow-up processes and record retention period provides limited oversight and may leave older adults at risk of harm and mistreatment.
- **Finding 3** – PDA needs stronger oversight of death reviews, caseload monitoring, and reassessments to better protect older adults.
- **Finding 4** – PDA considered the 20-day investigation timeframe, a key performance measure required by its own regulations, as merely a goal and not a requirement.
- **Finding 5** – Lack of a time limit for financial exploitation investigations increases the risk of harm to older adults.
- **Finding 6** – PDA failed to conduct required annual evaluations of the AAAs and provide public access to written reports of those results as required by statute.
- **Finding 7** – Reporting deficiencies related to the reliability and accuracy of monitoring results caused a lack of accountability and public transparency.
- **Finding 8** – PDA did not implement appropriate quality assurance controls for its Comprehensive Aging Performance Evaluation (CAPE) tool.
- **Finding 9** – Addressing deficiencies related to CAPE monitoring would strengthen PDA's oversight of the AAAs.

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- **Finding 10** – PDA’s failure to ensure comprehensive staff training by AAAs, combined with a lack of monitoring procedures, creates a competency gap that could leave older Pennsylvanians at risk.

What did the auditors recommend PDA do to fix these issues?

Auditors provided 39 recommendations for PDA related to improving their monitoring of AAAs, including the training and experience of the protective services staff.

Recommendations for PDA include:

- Two ways to address its monitoring process to help mitigate or reduce the risk that older adults are at risk of harm;
- Three ways to strengthen PDA’s monitoring and record-retention process;
- Five ways to address issues with oversight and monitoring of AAAs;
- Two ways to consider the 20-day turnaround as a requirement and not as a goal;
- Two ways to provide a timeline for financial exploitation cases and require documentation for delays;
- Two ways to meet its statutory requirements and improve transparency;
- Five ways to ensure monthly compliance data and CAPE monitoring results are accurate;
- Five ways to address issues with quality assurance;
- Six ways to address deficiencies within CAPE; and
- Seven ways to address its training program for AAAs.

What did the auditors recommend to the General Assembly?

Auditors provided 3 recommendations to the General Assembly to strengthen the Older Adults Protective Services Act (OAPSA), including enacting legislation to strengthen the law and improve the review process of all suspicious deaths, creating a task force to solicit input from stakeholders, and cooperatively work with PDA to further strengthen the law by helping ensure older adults are protected from financial exploitation and abuse.

What is CAPE?

CAPE, or the Comprehensive Aging Performance Evaluation, is a system PDA uses to conduct its monitoring of AAA investigations. CAPE replaces the previous Legacy monitoring system, was piloted by PDA in 2024 and was fully implemented in 2025.

What is the role of an Area Agency on Aging (AAA)?

AAAs are the front-line of support for older Pennsylvanians. They provide vital services, programs and information to millions of older adults and their caregivers. They do everything from providing meals to investigating claims of harm or mistreatment of older adults, whether they live at home or in a care facility.

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What is a performance audit?

A [performance audit](#) looks at whether state-funded programs and activities are meeting their goals and objectives, and if tax dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively.

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