



# OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR



KERRI L. HUNTER, CPA  
STATE AUDITOR

September 23, 2021

## SUICIDE PREVENTION PERFORMANCE AUDIT – STATUS REPORT

Members of the Legislative Audit Committee:

Attached is the status report from the Department of Public Health and Environment (Department) on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Office of the State Auditor's (OSA) *Suicide Prevention Performance Audit*.

### OSA REVIEW OF DOCUMENTATION

As part of the status report process, we requested and received supporting documentation for each recommendation that the Department reported as having been implemented. Specifically, we reviewed the following documentation:

- The Department's statement of work (SOW) guidance revised June 2021 and SOW training materials updated in July 2021.
- Documentation about the Department's work to evaluate how incentives could be used in its contracting.
- The Department's Contract Monitoring Program User's Manual revised in 2021.
- The Department's procedure for tracking invoices and creating invoice templates for its Suicide Prevention Program created in January 2021.
- The Department's Fiscal Procedures revised March 2021.

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Based on our review, the supporting documentation substantiates the Department's reported implementation status.



August 31, 2021

Kerri L. Hunter, CPA  
State Auditor  
Colorado Office of the State Auditor  
1525 Sherman St., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Auditor Hunter:

In response to your request, we have prepared the attached status report on the implementation status of audit recommendations contained in the Suicide Prevention Performance Audit. The report provides a brief explanation of the actions taken by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to implement each recommendation.

If you have any questions about this status report and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's efforts to implement the audit recommendations, please contact Jill Hunsaker Ryan 720-607-7190 or [jill.ryan@state.co.us](mailto:jill.ryan@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH  
Executive Director



## AUDIT RECOMMENDATION STATUS REPORT

AUDIT NAME	Suicide Prevention Performance Audit
AUDIT NUMBER	1934P
AGENCY	Department of Public Health and Environment
DATE OF STATUS REPORT	August 2021

### SECTION I: SUMMARY

REC. NUMBER	AGENCY'S RESPONSE	ORIGINAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE
1A	Agree	July 2021	Implemented	August 2021
1B	Agree	May 2021	Implemented	May 2021
1C	Agree	March 2021	Implemented	February 2021
1D	Agree	January 2021	Implemented	January 2021
1E	Agree	March 2021	Implemented	March 2021

### SECTION II: NARRATIVE DETAIL

#### RECOMMENDATION 1A

The Department of Public Health and Environment should ensure that the State receives the expected value from the Office of Suicide Prevention's contract and grant agreements by:

A Developing written guidance for executing agreements that clearly communicate the minimum performance expected of a contractor or grantee and delineate between requirements that contractors and grantees are expected to complete versus aspirational targets the Office wishes to communicate to contractors and grantees.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	Implemented	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE	August 2021
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The department reviewed existing guidance for statements of work and made updates and improvements to more clearly address how to draft minimum requirements within a scope of work that must be met as well as additional work that is authorized but not required as it exceeds the minimum requirements. The updated guidance has been released to the department and will be incorporated into updated trainings beginning in August.

#### RECOMMENDATION 1B

The Department of Public Health and Environment should ensure that the State receives the expected value from the Office of Suicide Prevention's contract and grant agreements by:

B Evaluating how incentives, such as paying bonus payments for achieving certain targets or renewing agreements after certain targets are achieved, could be used in contract and grant agreements and

developing written guidance for any items that are determined to be useful in contract and grant agreements.			
CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	Implemented	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE	May 2021
<b>AGENCY UPDATE</b>			
<p>The Department explored the efficacy of using incentives in grants in the division. Within the evaluation, the department looked into best practices and explored possible incentives such as payment of bonuses, agreement extensions and any other viable incentive approach identified in the research of best practices. Given that monetary incentives will reduce the number of contracts that can be awarded (by increasing costs of those contracts that are awarded), the incentives required to sufficiently incentivize the grantees to achieve greater performance must be less than 10% of the overall value of a given contract in order to justify the inclusion of incentives as the Office of Suicide Prevention does not want to reduce the number of contracts by more than the incentives will improve performance. In other words, our return on investment must be above \$0 to justify the use of incentives. The department is exploring piloting possible incentives in one or more future grant/contract cycles to ascertain actual efficacy of implementing identified approaches.</p>			

<b>RECOMMENDATION 1C</b>			
<p>The Department of Public Health and Environment should ensure that the State receives the expected value from the Office of Suicide Prevention’s contract and grant agreements by:</p>			
<p>C Executing agreements that align the timing of contractor or grantee invoicing with the submission and documentation of information demonstrating contractors’ or grantees’ performance of the work.</p>			
CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	Implemented	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE	February 2021
<b>AGENCY UPDATE</b>			
<p>The department agrees that the alignment of payment and documentation that the expenses relate to the contract are an essential part of contract monitoring and ensuring the state receives the expected value from each grant/contract. The department’s contract monitors regularly work with each grantee to understand work being done on the grant. Each invoice will be reviewed for consistency with the known work being performed and signed off by the contract monitor documenting that the items contained in the invoice are in alignment with the scope of work, are part of the awarded budget and forward the goals of the grant.</p>			
<p>Existing guidance was reviewed and updated in February 2021. The updated Contract Monitoring Manual includes new guidance that addresses deliverable acceptance prior to paying invoices. The manual states that the program and fiscal monitors must review invoices to ensure expenses: are allowable by fund; relate to and align with, the statement of work and deliverables; align with the budget; are reasonable, allocable and allowable, and do not exceed budget; ensure the math is correct and that the work has been completed during the invoice period, as well as contract period; and that goods have been received within the invoice period. The Prevention Services Division has incorporated this current practice.</p>			

**RECOMMENDATION 1D**

The Department of Public Health and Environment should ensure that the State receives the expected value from the Office of Suicide Prevention’s contract and grant agreements by:

D Developing written guidance for aligning cost reimbursement invoicing from contractors and grantees with the budgets in agreements.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	Implemented	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE	January 2021
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**AGENCY UPDATE**

The department developed additional written guidance, including invoice templates that mirror the grantee’s approved budget categories, for division grantees to guide them in submitting invoices. This work will help in aligning cost reimbursement invoicing from contractors and grantees with the budget agreements.

**RECOMMENDATION 1E**

The Department of Public Health and Environment should ensure that the State receives the expected value from the Office of Suicide Prevention’s contract and grant agreements by:

E Developing written guidance for determining what constitutes reasonable expenses and aligns with the statement of work and the agreement’s budget under cost reimbursement agreements.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	Implemented	CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION DATE	March 2021
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**AGENCY UPDATE**

The department developed additional written guidance for determining what constitutes reasonable grantee expenses in accordance with the approved statement work and contract budget for cost reimbursable grants. The guidance will aid staff in their required reviews of invoices to ensure that the state is only reimbursing for work associated with the approved budget and that forwards the programmatic goals, ensuring resources are only expended for the intended goals.