



# OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stelios Pavlou (303) 869-2833  
stelios.pavlou@state.co.us

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### MISLEADING YOUTH SERVICES REPORT PAINTS ROSIER PICTURE THAN REALITY

DENVER—the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) has released its performance audit of the Division of Youth Services' (Division) recidivism and education outcomes reports and has found a number of problems with both reports.

The Division supervised and treated about 5,100 youth aged 10 to 21 who were involved in the criminal justice system during Fiscal Year 2017, and beginning in July 2018, statute requires the Division to report annually on education outcomes and recidivism rates for youth discharged from Division custody.

In the *Education Outcomes at the Colorado Division of Youth Services* report, auditors found incomplete data, overstatements of academic improvement of youth in reading, language usage, and math, and incorrect calculations—for example reporting that 95% of youth had achieved a GED or high school diploma when in fact the figure stands at 60%.

In the *Recidivism Evaluation of the Colorado Division of Youth Services* report, auditors found that the Division did not include adult misdemeanor crimes adjudicated in the Denver County Court in its recidivism rate calculations, and it did not delineate recidivist acts that are included under the

DIANNE E. RAY, CPA  
STATE AUDITOR

OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR  
1525 SHERMAN STREET  
7TH FLOOR  
DENVER, 80203  
COLORADO

303.869.2800

Victim Rights Act versus other crimes, or include information on all recidivist convictions occurring within 3 years of discharge, both of which are required by statute.

The audit makes 2 recommendations.

The full report is available @ [www.colorado.gov/auditor](http://www.colorado.gov/auditor).

Under the direction of the state auditor, the OSA is the state's nonpartisan, independent external auditor with broad authority to audit state agencies, departments, institutions of higher education, and the Judicial and Legislative Branches. The OSA's professional staff serve the people of Colorado by addressing relevant public issues through high-quality, objective audits and reviews that promote accountability and positive change in government. Performance audits address whether programs operate in compliance with laws and regulations and in a manner that accomplishes intended program goals. Financial audits include annual audits of the state's basic financial statements and federal grants on a statewide level. IT audits review procedures and technology to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the state's critical computer systems and taxpayer data. The OSA also tracks about 4,000 Colorado local governments for compliance with the Local Government Audit Law.