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### **Division of Youth Services' Reporting on Educational Outcomes and Recidivism Data Has Improved**

DENVER—The Colorado Office of the State Auditor (OSA) has issued a performance audit of Division of Youth Services Reporting. Overall, auditors found that since the OSA's previous audit in 2019, the Division of Youth Services (Division), within the Department of Human Services, has improved the accuracy and quality of its reports on educational outcomes and recidivism data and rates for youth who discharge from its supervision.

State statute requires the Division to report annually to the General Assembly the recidivism data, recidivism rates, and the educational outcomes for youth who discharge from its supervision. The Division's Educational Outcomes Report provides information on the academic achievement and academic growth of youth discharged from Division supervision in the preceding fiscal year, and the Division's Recidivism Report provides information such as the recidivism rate, which is the rate at which youth reoffend, over 1, 2, and 3 years after discharge from Division supervision. Statute also requires the OSA to conduct two performance audits to examine the accuracy and quality of these reports. This is the second required audit; the first audit was completed in January 2019.

Although the Division has improved the accuracy and quality of both reports, auditors still identified some inaccuracies in the 2022 Educational Outcomes Report. For example, the Division reported that 240 of the 372 youth discharged in Fiscal Year 2021 left supervision with a high school diploma or General Educational Diploma (GED) in-hand at the time of discharge. However, auditors found that the Division's academic achievement analysis included data collected after the youth discharged from Division supervision. Specifically, 3 of the 240 youth attained their high school diploma or GED between 94 to 500 days after their discharge. These three youth earned their achievement

during a subsequent committal to the Division, but should not have been included in the Division's statistics for youth discharged in Fiscal Year 2021. Auditors identified other instances where numbers did not agree between sections of the 2022 Educational Outcomes Report.

“The problems we identified had a limited impact on the overall accuracy of the report,” said Dana Berry, Senior Legislative Auditor, “but there are still opportunities for the Division to improve its quality control procedures to ensure that the report provides accurate and reliable information for those who use it.”

The audit makes one recommendation to the Division for improvements. The full audit report is available online at [www.colorado.gov/auditor](http://www.colorado.gov/auditor).

### **About the Office of the State Auditor**

Under the direction of the State Auditor, the OSA's nonpartisan, professional staff promote government accountability by conducting independent performance, financial, and IT audits and evaluations of state agencies, departments, and institutions of higher education; conducting independent evaluations of the State's tax expenditures (e.g., credits, exemptions, deductions); tracking about 4,000 Colorado local governments for compliance with the Local Government Audit Law; and operating a statewide fraud reporting hotline.

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