

STATE OF CONNECTICUT



*AUDITORS' REPORT
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY
FISCAL YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2017, 2018 AND 2019*

AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
JOHN C. GERAGOSIAN ❖ ROBERT J. KANE

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May 7, 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with the provisions of Section 2-90 of the Connecticut General Statutes we have audited certain operations of the Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA). OGA includes the Judicial Review Council, Judicial Selection Commission, Board of Firearm Permit Examiners, Office of the Child Advocate, Office of the Victim Advocate, and the State Contracting Standards Board. The objectives of this review were to evaluate the office's internal controls, compliance with policies and procedures, as well as certain legal provisions, and management practices and operations for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The key findings and recommendations are presented below:

Page 11	<p>Our review revealed delays between appellants' Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE) hearing requests and the scheduled hearing dates. The backlog as of December 30, 2019, was 522 cases (465 revocations and 57 denials). The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection failed to promptly notify BFPE when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date. The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners should continue its efforts to reduce its hearing backlog to ensure compliance with Section 29-32b of the General Statutes. The board should retain copies of its appeal logs to measure its progress in reducing the backlog. The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection should promptly notify the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date. (Recommendation 1.)</p>
Page 13	<p>The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners did not file its Section 4-60 reports for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2018 and 2019. The Judicial Review Council did not file its Section 4-60 report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) filed its March 1, 2017 Section 46a-131 (12) biannual report on December 18, 2018. OCA has not completed or filed its March 2019 report as of March 2020. The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners, Judicial Review Council, and Office of the Child Advocate should submit all reports required by the General Statutes in a timely manner. (Recommendation 2.)</p>

STATE OF CONNECTICUT



AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

JOHN C. GERAGOSIAN

State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1559

ROBERT J. KANE

May 7, 2020

AUDITORS' REPORT

We have audited certain operations of the Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA) in fulfillment of our duties under Section 2-90 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The scope of our audit included, but was not necessarily limited to, the years ended June 30, 2017, 2018 and 2019. The objectives of our audit were to:

1. Evaluate the office's internal controls over significant management and financial functions;
2. Evaluate the office's compliance with policies and procedures internal to the department or promulgated by other state agencies, as well as certain legal provisions; and
3. Evaluate the effectiveness, economy, and efficiency of certain management practices and operations, including certain financial transactions.

Our methodology included reviewing written policies and procedures, financial records, minutes of meetings, and other pertinent documents; interviewing various personnel of the department; and testing selected transactions. We obtained an understanding of internal controls that we deemed significant within the context of the audit objectives and assessed whether such controls have been properly designed and placed in operation. We tested certain of those controls to obtain evidence regarding the effectiveness of their design and operation. We also obtained an understanding of legal provisions that are significant within the context of the audit objectives, and we assessed the risk that illegal acts, including fraud, and violations of contracts, grant agreements, or other legal provisions could occur. Based on that risk assessment, we designed and performed procedures to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance significant to those provisions.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the standards applicable to performance audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform our audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides such a basis.

The accompanying Résumé of Operations is presented for informational purposes. This information was obtained from various available sources including, but not limited to, the

department's management and the state's information systems, and was not subjected to the procedures applied in our audit of the department. For the areas audited, we identified:

1. Deficiencies in internal controls;
2. Apparent noncompliance with policies and procedures or legal provisions; and
3. Need for improvement in management practices and procedures that we deemed to be reportable.

The State Auditors' Findings and Recommendations in the accompanying report presents any findings arising from our audit of the Office of Governmental Accountability.

COMMENTS

FOREWORD

The Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA) operates under the provisions of Chapter 15a of the General Statutes, sections 1-300 to 1-301 and includes the Judicial Review Council (JRC), Judicial Selection Commission (JSC), Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE), Office of the Child Advocate (OCA), Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA), and State Contracting Standards Board (SCSB).

Significant Legislation

Public Act 16-2, May Special Session, removed funding for the OGA Office of the Executive Administrator (OEA) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017.

Public Act 16-3, May Special Session, removed the Office of State Ethics, State Elections Enforcement Commission, and the Freedom of Information Commission from OGA.

Governmental Accountability Commission

Section 1-301(a)(1) created the Governmental Accountability Commission (GAC) within the Office of Governmental Accountability consisting of one person from each council, commission, examining board or advocate. The Governor appoints an OGA executive administrator from a list developed by the commission. The executive administrator position has been vacant since April 1, 2016. Public Act 16-2 did not provide funding to OGA. As a result, the Office of the Executive Administrator's functions transferred to the Department of Administrative Services' Small Agency Resource Team (SmART).

Judicial Review Council

Section 51-51k of the General Statutes provides for a Judicial Review Council (JRC). Dennis O'Connor served as executive director until February 2017. Judith Rossi was appointed executive director on February 17, 2017 through June 26, 2019, when Robert S. Bello, Esq., was appointed as interim executive director. The executive director is hired by JRC to manage its functions and duties.

The Judicial Review Council consists of 12 members and 13 alternate members appointed by the Governor with the approval of the General Assembly. JRC is empowered to hear complaints about the conduct of judges, perform investigations, and censure or suspend judges if necessary. Members receive no compensation for their services. JRC members serve 4-year terms while alternate members serve 3-year terms.

The composition of JRC and alternate members as of June 30, 2019, is as follows:

Council Members:

Three Superior or Appellate Court Judge Members:

Honorable James W. Abrams
Honorable Hillary B. Strackbein
Vacant

Three Attorney Members:

Russell L. London, Esq.
Genea O. Bell, Esq.
Mark D. Phillips, Esq.

Six Public Members:

Motkue A. Bowles
Lawrence Goldman
Peter W. Nathan
Richard Smith
William R. Dyson
Vacant

Alternate Members:

Judge Members:

Honorable Laura F. Baldini
Honorable Anna M. Ficeto

Attorney Members:

Mark D. Leighton, Esq.
Richard T. Meehan, Esq.

Public Members:

Samantha P. Rosenberg

Vacant

Vacant

Family Support Magistrate Members:

Honorable Frederic Gilman

Vacant

Vacant

Workers' Compensation Commissioner (WCC) Members:

Scott A. Barton

Randy L. Cohen

Jodi M. Gregg

Others who also served on the council during the audit period were Barbara D. Aaron, Honorable Barbara Bellis, Honorable Elizabeth Bozzuto, Jay A. Dirnberger, Honorable Frank A. Iannotti, Honorable Maureen Keegan, Patricia LeBel-Lasse, Amy McLean Salls, Honorable Norma Sanchez-Figueroa and Honorable Jose Suarez.

Judicial Selection Commission

The Judicial Selection Commission (JSC) was established under the authority of Article XXV of the Amendments to the Constitution of the State of Connecticut. Additional authority is provided in Section 51-44a of the General Statutes. Section 51-44a provides that the commission shall seek, evaluate, and recommend qualified candidates to the Governor for consideration in nominating new judges. This section also provides that the commission evaluate incumbent judges seeking re-nomination or nomination to a different court. Except for elected judgeships (probate judges), the Governor nominates judges for all state courts exclusively from the commission's approved list.

Per Section 51-44a of the General Statutes, JSC consists of 12 members. The commission members serve for 3-year terms and until their successors are appointed and have qualified or 90 days after the completion of their terms, whichever is earlier. Members and appointments as of June 30, 2019, are as follows:

	<u>Term expires</u>
Appointed by the Governor:	
William A. Conti, Esq.	June 12, 2021
Joseph McGee	June 8, 2019
Peter C. Smith	August 20, 2020
James F. Sullivan, Esq.	November 1, 2021
Charles E. Tiernan, III, Esq. Chair	May 21, 2022
William Welz	November 1, 2021

Appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate: Rosemarie Paine, Esq.	April 30, 2020
Appointed by the Senate Majority Leader: Ken Saccente	May 15, 2021
Appointed by the Senate Minority Leader: Edward R. Lennon, Jr.	January 18, 2022
Appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives: Vacant	
Appointed by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives: Gregory C. Davis, Esq.	January 17, 2020
Appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives: Scott Storms	February 17, 2022

Others who also served on the Commission during the audit period were Frank Alvarado, Robert S. Bello, Paul Mounds, Dr. Lindsay Curtis, Clifford Leach, Pamela Sawyer, Phillip W. Ryan, Cara Passaro, Audrey Blondin, Joel Rudikoff, William Watson III and Sarah Fryxell.

Ann Gimmartino served as manager of the Commission until July 1, 2018. Monika Nugent became manager on December 21, 2018 and continued to serve in that capacity throughout the audited period.

Board of Firearms Permit Examiners

The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE) operates under Title 29, Chapter 529, Section 29-32b of the General Statutes.

The function of the BFPE is to hear appeals of any person aggrieved by any refusal to issue or renew a permit or certificate under the provisions of section 29-28 (local chief of police, warden of the borough, or first selectman) or 29-36f (commissioner of emergency services and public protection); or by any limitation or revocation of such permit or certificate; or by refusal to provide an application for such permit or certificate. On such appeal, the board is required to inquire into and determine the facts and, unless it determines that such refusal, limitation, or revocation would be for just cause, it shall order such permit or certificate to be issued, renewed, or restored or the limitation modified or rescinded.

Under the provisions of Section 29-32b, (a) of the General Statutes, the 9 members of the BFPE are appointed by and serve terms concurrently with the Governor until their successors are appointed and qualify. Members of the board are not compensated for their services, but are reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in performing their duties. As of June 30, 2019, the board was comprised of the following members, along with the agencies or organizations that nominated them:

Ye Connecticut Gun Guild, Inc.
Peter Kuck

The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association, Inc.
Anthony Iaconis

Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, or designee
Gudrun K. Johnson

Connecticut State Association of Chiefs of Police
Chief Carl Rosensweig

Commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, or designee
Colonel Kyle E. Overturf, Board Secretary

Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Dr. Cynthia D. Conrad

Chief Court Administrator:
Vacant, Retired judge of the Superior Court

Public Members:
Frank P. Blando, Esq., Chair
Carolyn M. Futtner, Esq.

Others who also served on the Board during the audit period were Dr. Charles C. Dike and James A. Greer II.

BFPE consisted of an office manager and a part-time assistant during the audited period.

Office of the Child Advocate

The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) operates primarily under the provisions of Title 46a, Chapter 813a of the General Statutes, sections 46a-13k to 46a-13s.

The purpose of OCA is to safeguard the legal and civil rights of children who reside in the state. This includes evaluating the procedures for and delivery of services to children by state agencies and those entities that receive state funds, investigating complaints about services for children, and various other activities specified in the statutes.

The child advocate is appointed by the Governor, based on the advice of the office's advisory committee, and is also a classified employee subject to civil service rules. Sarah Healy Eagan, Esq., became the child advocate on September 9, 2013 and served in that capacity throughout the audited period.

As provided in Section 46a-13r of the General Statutes, there exists an advisory committee for OCA. Said committee shall prepare and submit to the Governor a list of candidates for appointment of the Child Advocate. The advisory committee consists of 7 appointed members that are brought together only when there is a vacancy in the Child Advocate position. During the audited period, the appointing authorities did not activate the advisory committee.

In addition, there exists a Child Fatality Review Panel in accordance with Section 46a-13l (b), of the General Statutes. The panel consists of 13 permanent members. As of June 30, 2019, the members were:

Child Advocate

Sarah Healy Eagan, J.D., Co-Chair

Commissioner of Children and Families designee

Ken Mysogland, MSW

Commissioner of Public Health designee

Amy Mirizzi, MPH, CPH

Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection designee

Lt. Seth Mancini, Esq.

Chief Medical Examiner designee

Greg Vincent, M.D.

Chief State's Attorney designee

Anne Mahoney, Esq.

Appointed by the Governor:

Kirsten Bechtel, M.D., Pediatrician, Co-Chair

Appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate:

Vacant

Appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

Giuseppina M. Violano, Ph.D., Community Service Group Representative

Appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate:

Attorney Andrea Barton Reeves, Esq.

Appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate:

Thomas C. Michalski, Jr., LCSW

Appointed by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives:

Regina Wilson, Ph.D., Psychologist

Appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives:
Steven Craig Rogers, M.D., Injury Prevention Representative

There are 3 additional temporary members with particular expertise who were also selected by a majority of the panel:

Ted Rosenkrantz, M.D., Neonatal-Perinatal practitioner
Tonya Johnson, domestic violence representative
Michael Soltis, M.D., child abuse physician

Others who also served the Office during the audit period were Margie Hudson, Susan Williams, and Jack Reed,

Office of the Victim Advocate

Section 46a-13b of the General Statutes charges the Office of Victim Advocate (OVA) to ensure the statutory and state constitutional rights of victims of crimes. Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., has been the state victim advocate since December 26, 2014 and remained in that position throughout the audited period.

Section 46a-13h of the General Statutes provides for an advisory committee to create a list of potential victim advocate candidates and submit the list to the Governor for consideration. The advisory committee is activated when there is a victim advocate vacancy, and becomes inactive after the Governor appoints a victim advocate.

State Contracting Standards Board

The State Contracting Standards Board (SCSB) operates under Chapter 62 of the General Statutes, Sections 4e-1 to 4e-50. Section 4e-2 of the General Statutes established SCSB to consist of 14 members whose terms are coterminous with the terms of their appointing authority. The Governor appoints the chairperson. The members were as follows on June 30, 2019:

Appointed by the Governor:

Lawrence Fox, Chair
Alfred W. Bertoline
Bruce H. Buff
Albert Ilg
Jean M. Morningstar
Robert D. Rinker
Brenda L. Sisco
Vacant

Appointed by President Pro Tempore of the Senate:
Salvatore Luciano

Appointed by Speaker of the House of Representatives:
Charles W. Casella, Jr.

Appointed by Majority Leader of the Senate:
Donna Karnes

Appointed by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives:
Stuart Mahler

Appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate:
Thomas G. Ahneman

Appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives:
Vacant

Others who also served on the Board during the audit period were Claudia Baio and Roy Steiner.

Section 4e-2(f) of the General Statutes states that the Governor shall appoint the executive director of the board. David Guay has served as executive director of SCSB since February 6, 2014.

Section 4e-2(g) of the General Statutes states that SCSB shall appoint a chief procurement officer for a term not to exceed 6 years. Julia K. L. Marquis resigned on March 16, 2017 and the board has not appointed a replacement.

RÉSUMÉ OF OPERATIONS

General Fund Receipts

General Fund receipts during the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017, 2018, and 2019 are presented below:

	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2018-2019</u>
Late Fee – Elections/Financial Disclosure	\$ 1,200	\$ 600	\$ 1,400
Sale of Property	1,371	-	1,974
Refunds of Expend-Prior Years	-	-	11
Total General Fund Receipts	<u>\$ 2,571</u>	<u>\$ 600</u>	<u>\$ 3,385</u>

The removal of the Office of State Ethics, State Elections Enforcement Commission and the Freedom of Information Commission from the Office of Governmental Accountability reduced the total OGA revenues.

General Fund Expenditures

General Fund expenditures during the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017, 2018, and 2019 are presented below:

	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2018-2019</u>
Personal Services	\$ 1,609,872	\$ 1,453,843	\$ 1,401,038
Purchased and Contracted Services	<u>95,324</u>	<u>125,972</u>	<u>129,042</u>
Total General Fund Expenditures	<u>\$ 1,705,196</u>	<u>\$ 1,579,814</u>	<u>\$ 1,530,080</u>

Expenditures decreased for personal services from fiscal year 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 as a result of a number of retirements replaced with lower-paid employees. Purchased and contracted services increased from fiscal year 2017 to 2019 due to the purchase of new laptop computers.

STATE AUDITORS' FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our examination of the records of Office of Accountability disclosed the following 2 findings and recommendations, of which 1 has been repeated from the previous audit:

Board of Firearms Permit Examiners' Hearing Backlog

Background:

Section 29-28(b) of the General Statutes states that individuals may apply for a state permit to carry a pistol or revolver through their local authorities who may deny or issue a temporary 60-day permit, pending further review by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP). Decisions to deny a permit at either the local or the state level may be appealed to the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE).

The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners schedules 12 denials of permit applications and 15 revocations of permits per bi-monthly board meeting.

Criteria:

Section 29-32b (b), (c), and (d) of the General Statutes indicates that the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners should schedule a hearing within 10 days of receiving an appeal at such time and place as it reasonably determines to be required, but not less than once every 90 days. While an appeal is pending, the board may request such additional information from the appellant and the issuing authority as it deems reasonably necessary to conduct a fair and impartial hearing.

It also states that upon the expiration of a temporary permit revocation under Section 46b-15 or 46b-16a of the General Statutes, such person may notify the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection that such order has expired. Upon verification of the expired revocation, and provided such person is not otherwise disqualified from holding such permit pursuant to subsection (b) of section 29-28, the department shall reinstate such permit.

Condition:

Our review found delays between appellant's hearing requests and the scheduled hearing dates. The backlog as of December 30, 2019, was 522 cases (465 revocations and 57 denials). Based on this backlog and case scheduling, it would take 34 meetings to resolve the revocations and 6 meetings to resolve the denials. Based on the meetings scheduled at the time of our review, the board would hear the last revocation case in the backlog on July 8, 2021, and the last denial case on March 19, 2020. In addition, BFPE does not retain historical copies of the appeal log. Therefore, we were unable to determine the backlog at prior dates.

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection failed to promptly notify the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date. In some instances, DESPP failed to notify BFPE of cases that were resolved or withdrawn several months prior to the scheduled hearing.

Effect: The considerable delay between the receipt of a request for an appeal and the related hearing or negotiated DESPP settlement may deny appellants their right to a timely hearing. Without prompt DESPP notification, the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners did not take resolved revocation cases off its backlog and did not schedule other cases instead.

Cause: The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection does not communicate resolved or withdrawn cases to the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners. DESPP relied on appellants to notify BFPE that the revocation was resolved.

Prior Audit Finding: This finding has been previously reported in the last 6 audit reports over 15 years covering the fiscal years ended June 30, 2001 to 2016.

Recommendation: The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners should continue its efforts to reduce its hearing backlog to ensure compliance with Section 29-32b of the General Statutes. The board should retain copies of its appeal logs to measure its progress in reducing the backlog.

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection should promptly notify the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date. (See Recommendation 1.)

Board of Firearms Permit Examiners Response:

“We agree, however the time for a scheduled hearing for a denial by a local issuing authority of a temporary state pistol permit is now approximately 60 days. It should also be noted that a significant number of revocations by DESPP that result in appeals are initially mandated by statute.

In addition to BFPE’s effort, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection has been working on a system that will generate an email to Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when DESPP reinstates a pistol permit. This will allow us to close this file and move appellants to a closer more current date. The Board is hopeful this will improve our backlog.”

Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Response:

“We agree with both recommendations. Unfortunately, however, due to the number of revocations initiated annually as compared to the number of hearing dates, there will always be a backlog. Similarly, there are a considerable number of appellants who file an original appeal but fail to show up to the hearing or even follow through with the process. We are unable to withdraw people from the process without their express declaration. We disagree with the statement that DESPP-SLFU has not been timely notifying BFPE of reinstatements. The procedure requires immediate notification to the BFPE, which routinely occurs.”

Reporting

- Criteria:* Section 4-60 of the General Statutes requires each budgeted agency to provide a report to the Governor of its activities of the previous fiscal year. The Governor then provides these reports to the Commissioner of Administrative Services for annual publication by December 1st.
- Section 46a-131 (12) of the General Statutes requires that the Office of the Child Advocate report to the legislature regarding conditions of confinement for youth detained or incarcerated in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems on March 1, 2017, and every two years thereafter.
- Condition:* The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE) did not file its Section 4-60 reports for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2018 and 2019. The Judicial Review Council (JRC) did not file its Section 4-60 report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018.
- The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) filed its March 1, 2017 Section 46a-131 (12) biannual report on December 18, 2018. OCA has not completed or filed its March 2019 report as of March 2020.
- Effect:* The intended report recipients were not able to evaluate the required information in a timely manner.
- Cause:* Lack of administrative control contributed to the missed or late report filing.
- Prior Audit Finding:* This finding has not been previously reported.
- Recommendation:* The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners, Judicial Review Council, and Office of the Child Advocate should submit all reports required by the General Statutes in a timely manner. (See Recommendation 2.)

Board of Firearms Permit Examiners Response:

“We agree and will do our best to improve on timely submission.”

Judicial Review Council Response:

“We agree that the report required by C.G.S Section 4-60 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018 was not filed. JRC has taken steps internally to ensure that reports are filed in compliance with this statute.”

Office of the Child Advocate Response:

“We agree OCA is committed to meeting our statutory obligations...timelines are dependent on competing critical obligations as well as OCA's ability to ensure that the information we provide in public reports is wholly accurate, and that recommendations offered are consistent with best practice which is always evolving.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Status of Prior Audit Recommendations:

Our prior audit report on the Office of Governmental Accountability contained 3 recommendations. Two are being followed-up on as part of the Office of State Ethics and State Elections Enforcement Commission audits, and one is being repeated or restated with modifications during the current audit.

- The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners should continue its efforts to reduce its hearing backlog to ensure compliance with Section 29-32b of the General Statutes. The board should retain copies of its appeal logs to measure its progress in reducing the backlog. **This recommendation is being repeated. (See Recommendation 1.)**
- The Office of State Ethics and the State Elections Enforcement Commission should file their annual reports required by the General Statutes in a timely manner. The reports should include all statutorily required information. OSE should seek legislation to combine the reporting requirements of Section 1-81(a)(6) and Section 1-92(f) of the General Statutes. **The status of this recommendation will be reported within the auditors' reports for the Office of State Ethics for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017, 2018 and 2019, and State Elections Enforcement Commission for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017 and 2018.**
- The State Elections Enforcement Commission should strengthen controls over access to Core-CT when employees terminate employment. The agency should add necessary steps to its separation procedures to ensure that it promptly disables employee access at the time of separation. **The status of this recommendation will be reported within the State Elections Enforcement Commission audit report for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017 and 2018.**

Current Audit Recommendations:

- 1. The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners should continue its efforts to reduce its hearing backlog to ensure compliance with Section 29-32b of the General Statutes. The board should retain copies of its appeal logs to measure its progress in reducing the backlog.**

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection should promptly notify the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date.

Comment:

Our review revealed delays between appellant's BFPE hearing requests and the scheduled hearing dates. The backlog as of December 30, 2019, was 522 cases (465 revocations and 57 denials). The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection failed to promptly notify the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners when revocations were resolved or appellants withdrew their appeal prior to their scheduled hearing date.

- 2. The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners, Judicial Review Council, and Office of the Child Advocate should submit all reports required by the General Statutes in a timely manner.**

Comment:

The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BFPE) did not file its Section 4-60 reports for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2018 and 2019. The Judicial Review Council (JRC) did not file its Section 4-60 report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018.

The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) filed its March 1, 2017 Section 46a-131 (12) biannual report on December 18, 2018. OCA has not completed or filed its March 2019 report as of March 2020.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Auditors of Public Accounts would like to recognize the auditors who contributed to this report:

Lena Dang
Nikolaos Perdikakis

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we wish to express our appreciation for the courtesies and cooperation extended to our representatives by the personnel of the Office of Governmental Accountability during the course of our examination.



Nikolaos Perdikakis
Principal Auditor

Approved:



John C. Geragosian
State Auditor



Robert J. Kane
State Auditor