COMPLIANCE AUDIT

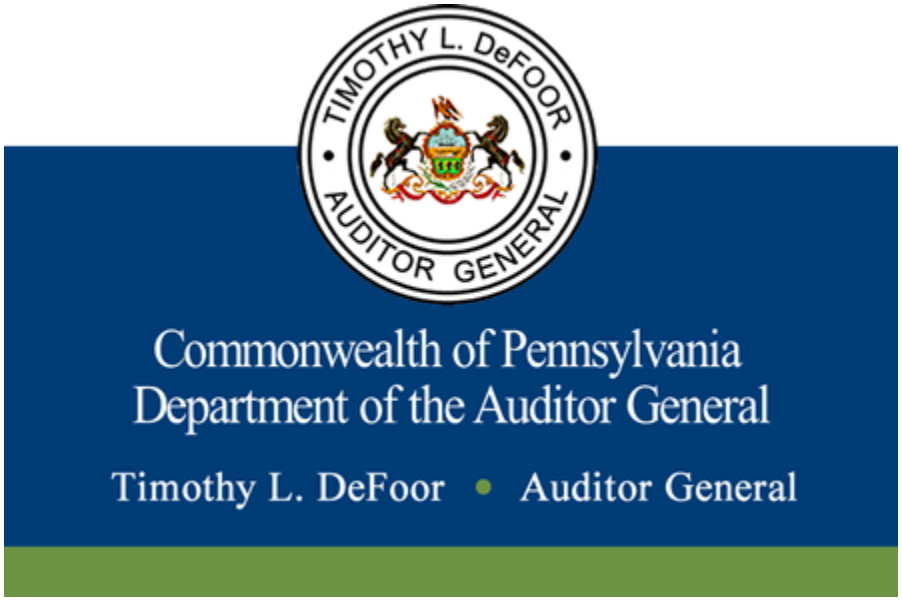
The Relief Association of the Ogontz Fire Company

Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025

September 2026



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Arthur Gordon, Jr., President
The Relief Association of the Ogontz
Fire Company
Montgomery County

We have conducted a compliance audit of The Relief Association of The Ogontz Fire Company (relief association) for the period January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 72 P.S. § 403; and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act ("VFRA Act"), see 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.

2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not, nor was it required to be, conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

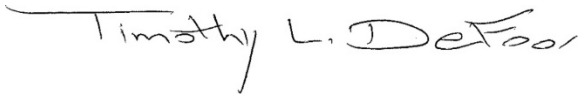
Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief association funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.

- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
July 23, 2026

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,[1] Section 403 of The Fiscal Code,[2] and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act ("VFRA Act"),[3] the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law, commonly referred to as Act 205,[4] are properly expended.

The relief association is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

The VFRA Act governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct business. To fulfill its primary purpose, the VFRA Act authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by the VFRA Act, it is the responsibility of relief associations to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the relief association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the relief association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all relief association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the relief association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

[1] Pa. Const. Art. VIII § 10.
[2] 72 P.S. § 403.
[3] 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq*.
[4] 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.*

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

During the conduct of our current audit, relief association officials indicated that the relief association is considering dissolution as a result of financial and manpower constraints due to the Cheltenham Township's decertification of the Ogontz Fire Department. Prudent business practice dictates that relief associations contemplating dissolution should consider retaining legal counsel to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing non-profit charitable organizations, and to safeguard all benefits owed to active and former association members.

If dissolution is pursued, the remaining relief association members must convene a meeting to formally approve the dissolution, as well as the disposition of assets. In most cases, all equipment and monetary assets of the dissolving relief association are to be transferred to a newly established or existing relief association affiliated with the new or existing volunteer fire company.

To prepare for dissolution, the relief association should compile a complete and accurate listing of all monetary assets and equipment to be transferred. A physical inventory of all equipment should be conducted to support the accuracy of this listing.

Following approval of the dissolution, the relief association should obtain a signed receipt from the recipient relief association documenting the transfer of the monetary assets and equipment. This receipt serves as verification of the assets transferred. The equipment then becomes assets of the recipient relief association and should be recorded on its equipment roster.

Additionally, following approval of the dissolution, relief association officials should contact this Department to schedule a final audit. The receipt and transfer of equipment and monetary assets will also be verified during the audit of the recipient relief association.

As of the date of this report, the relief association has not made a formal commitment to dissolve and/or merge with another relief association.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 16, 2020, Cheltenham Township decertified the Ogontz Fire Company. Consequently, Cheltenham Township no longer allocates state aid to the relief association.

As of December 31, 2025, based on the relief association's records, its total cash was $22,335.

Based on the relief association's records, its total expenditures for the period January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025, were $369,603, as noted below. The accuracy of these expenditures was evaluated as part of the Department's audit to conclude on the relief association's compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.[5] **The scope of the Department's audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of these amounts.**

Expenditures:		
Benefit Services:		
Relief benefits	$	368,000
Fire Services:		
Equipment maintenance	$	463
Administrative Services:		
Bond premiums	$	765
Other administrative expenses		375
Total Administrative Services	$	1,140
Total Expenditures	$	369,603

The volunteer firefighters' relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

Ogontz Fire Company

[5] Accuracy was evaluated for a selection of transactions based on dollar amount, category, and/or random selection.

THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE OGONTZ FIRE COMPANY
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The relief association has complied with the prior audit finding and recommendation, as follows:

- Failure To Document That Annual Physical Equipment Inventories Were Conducted

  By conducting and documenting an annual physical inventory of all relief association owned equipment.

We commend the relief association management for its efforts in complying with the finding and recommendation contained in the prior audit report. The relief association management should strive to remain in compliance with all applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures.

THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF THE OGONTZ FIRE COMPANY
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Joshua D. Shapiro
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Relief Association of the Ogontz Fire Company Governing Body:

Mr. Arthur Gordon, Jr.
President

Mr. Rick Gusdorff
Vice President

Mr. Stephen Farrington
Secretary

Mr. Philip Washington
Treasurer

A report was also distributed to the following municipality, which allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association:

Ms. Alyson Elliott
Secretary
Cheltenham Township

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.