

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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SAVES Relief Association  
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania  
For the Period  
January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024

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May 2025



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018  
Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General  
Twitter: @PAAuditorGen  
www.PaAuditor.gov**

**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. David May, President  
SAVES Relief Association  
Allegheny County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the SAVES Relief Association (relief association) for the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024. 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.

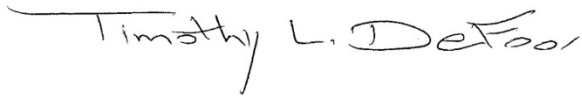
The objective of the audit was to determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds. Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objective 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 objective. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

We were not able to obtain an independent confirmation of a portion of the cash balance and a portion of the investment balance directly from the financial institution. Therefore, while the relief association provided bank and investment statements that indicated that, as of December 31, 2024, the relief association had a cash balance of \$32,509 and an investment balance with a fair value of \$258,194, we were not able to verify portions of those cash and investment balances.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, except for the effects, if any, of the matter described in the preceding paragraph, for the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024, 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy L. DeFoor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first name.

Timothy L. DeFoor  
Auditor General  
May 16, 2025

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## BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,<sup>1</sup> Section 403 of The Fiscal Code,<sup>2</sup> and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act ("VFRA Act"),<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Pa. Const. Art. VIII § 10.

<sup>2</sup> 72 P.S. § 403.

<sup>3</sup> 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.*

## BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Aspinwall Borough	Allegheny	\$19,881	\$20,435	\$20,746
Sharpsburg Borough	Allegheny	*	*	\$16,662

\* On October 26, 2023, the SAVES Relief Association was formed as a result of a merger between the Aspinwall Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and the Sharpsburg Fireman's Relief Association. Sharpsburg Borough began issuing state aid to the newly formed Relief Association in 2024.

Based on the relief association's records, its total cash and investments as of December 31, 2024, were \$290,703, as illustrated below:

Cash	\$ 32,509
Fair Value of Investments	<u>258,194</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u><u>\$ 290,703</u></u>

## BACKGROUND – (Continued)

Based on the relief association's records, its total expenditures for the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024, were \$117,134, 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.<sup>5</sup> **The scope of the Department's audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of these amounts.**

### Expenditures:

Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	\$ 61,487
Death benefits	2,000
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 63,487</u>
Equipment purchased	\$ 1,588
Training expenses	635
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 2,223</u>
Administrative Services:	
Bond premiums	\$ 1,397
Other administrative expenses	27
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$ 1,424</u>
Total Investments Purchased	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
Total Expenditures	<u><u>\$ 117,134</u></u>

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:

Southern Allegheny Valley Emergency Services

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

SAVES RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Joshua D. Shapiro**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

SAVES Relief Association Governing Body:

**Mr. David May**  
President

**Mr. Frank J. Bagnato**  
Vice President

**Mr. Patrick Glen Rockhill**  
Secretary

**Mr. Nick Scheid**  
Treasurer

The following municipalities allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association and received a copy of this report:

**Ms. Melissa Lang O'Malley**  
Secretary  
Aspinwall Borough

**Ms. Christine DeRunk**  
Manager/Chief Administrator  
Sharpsburg Borough

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://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](mailto:news@PaAuditor.gov).