

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Friendship Hose Co. 1 – Relief Association Cumberland County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017

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August 2018



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

Mr. Travis Sims, President  
Friendship Hose Co. 1 –  
Relief Association  
Cumberland County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Friendship Hose Co. 1 - Relief Association (relief association) pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and mandated by the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010 (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017.

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 required to be and was not 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 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.


Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017, 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, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Inadequate Relief Association Bylaws

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

August 8, 2018

  
EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE  
Auditor General

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## BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010, (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, 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, Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (commonly referred to as Act 205), 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.

Act 118 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, Act 118 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 118, 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 association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the 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.

**BACKGROUND – (Continued)**

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

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Newville Borough	Cumberland	\$ 6,902	\$ 6,267
Lower Mifflin Township	Cumberland	\$ 4,788	\$ 4,920
North Newton Township	Cumberland	\$ 5,895	\$ 6,957
Upper Mifflin Township	Cumberland	\$ 4,123	\$ 4,221
West Pennsboro Township	Cumberland	\$14,726	\$10,324

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:

Friendship Hose Co. No.1 Inc.

FRIENDSHIP HOSE CO. 1 - RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

**Finding – Inadequate Relief Association Bylaws**

Condition: The existing bylaws of the relief association do not contain all of the provisions required by Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(c). Specifically, the bylaws do not address that the signatures of at least two officers, one of whom shall be the disbursing officer, shall be required to bind the association by formal contract or to issue a negotiable instrument.

Criteria: Act 118 at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7415(c)(3) states, that the relief association’s bylaws shall:

- (3) Require that the signatures of at least two officers, one of whom shall be the disbursing officer, shall be required to bind the association by formal contract or to issue a negotiable instrument.

Furthermore, the relief association bylaws should authorize and clearly specify the criteria to be met before receiving death or relief benefits and the amount of any benefit payments. In addition, the bylaws should address the authorization of compensation to relief association officers.

Cause: Relief association officials indicated that they were unaware of the mandatory bylaw provisions established by Act 118.

Effect: As a result of the mandatory provisions not being included in the bylaws, the relief association may have conducted its affairs without proper authorization.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials review and update the bylaws governing their organization so that the bylaws meet the requirements set forth in Act 118 and properly authorize the operating procedures of the relief association. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General’s publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS’ RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

Management’s Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and indicated they will take action to comply with the recommendation.

Auditor’s Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

FRIENDSHIP HOSE CO. 1 - RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

Cash	\$ 44,875
Fair Value of Investments	<u>73,046</u>
Total Cash and Investments	<u><u>\$ 117,921</u></u>



FRIENDSHIP HOSE CO. 1 - RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION  
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES  
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2016 TO DECEMBER 31, 2017

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	<u>\$    16,950</u>
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$    28,571
Equipment maintenance	9,081
Training expenses	<u>22,379</u>
Total Fire Services	<u>\$    60,031</u>
Administrative Services:	
Other administrative expenses	\$    3,498
Bond premiums	<u>845</u>
Total Administrative Services	<u>\$    4,343</u>
Total Expenditures	<u><u>\$    81,324</u></u>

FRIENDSHIP HOSE CO. 1 - RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Tom W. Wolf**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Friendship Hose Co. 1 - Relief Association Governing Body:

**Mr. Travis Sims**  
President

**Ms. Teresa Turnbaugh**  
Secretary

**Mr. Joel Griffie**  
Treasurer

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

**Mr. Fred A. Potzer**  
Secretary  
Newville Borough

**Ms. Brandi Lay**  
Secretary  
Lower Mifflin Township

**Ms. Bonnie L. Myers**  
Secretary  
North Newton Township

**Ms. Stephanie L. Bitner**  
Secretary  
Upper Mifflin Township

**Ms. Evelyn Swartz**  
Secretary  
West Pennsboro Township

FRIENDSHIP HOSE CO. 1 - RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

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