

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan Northampton County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017

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January 2019



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE  
AUDITOR GENERAL

The Board of Township Supervisors  
Bushkill Township  
Northampton County  
Nazareth, PA 18064

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Section 402(j) of Act 205 and 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 conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if municipal officials took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report; and
2. To determine if the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above. To determine if municipal officials took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report, we inquired of plan officials and evaluated supporting documentation provided by officials evidencing that the suggested corrective action has been appropriately taken. To determine whether the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, our methodology included the following:

- We determined whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements by verifying the annual deposit date of state aid and determining whether deposits were made within 30 days of receipt for all years within the period under audit.

- We determined whether annual employer contributions were calculated and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by examining the municipality's calculation of the plan's annual financial requirements and minimum municipal obligation (MMO) and comparing these calculated amounts to amounts actually budgeted and deposited into the pension plan as evidenced by supporting documentation.
- We determined whether annual employee contributions were calculated, deducted, and deposited into the pension plan in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by testing total members' contributions on an annual basis using the rates obtained from the plan's governing document in effect for all years within the period under audit and examining documents evidencing the deposit of these employee contributions into the pension plan.
- We determined whether retirement benefits calculated for both of the plan members who retired during the current audit period, represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and were properly determined and disbursed in accordance with the plan's governing document, applicable laws and regulations by recalculating the amount of the monthly pension benefit due to the retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipients.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2017 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2016 and 2018, respectively, in accordance with Act 205 and whether selected information provided on these reports is accurate, complete, and in accordance with plan provisions to ensure compliance for participation in the state aid program by comparing selected information to supporting source documentation.
- We determined whether the terms of the plan's one unallocated insurance contract, including ownership and any restrictions, were in compliance with plan provisions, investment policies, and state regulations by comparing the terms of the contract with the plan's provisions, investment policies, and state regulations.
- We determined whether provisions of the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) were in accordance with the provisions of Act 205 by examining provisions stated in the plan's governing documents.

Township officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the township's internal controls as they relate to the township's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of our audit objectives, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Additionally and as previously

described, we tested transactions, assessed official actions, performed analytical procedures, and interviewed selected officials to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance with legal and regulatory requirements or noncompliance with provisions of contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies that are significant within the context of the audit objectives.

The results of our procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies.

The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis. We did not audit the information or conclude on it and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Bushkill Township and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank township officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

January 13, 2019



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE  
Auditor General

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## BACKGROUND

On December 18, 1984, the Pennsylvania Legislature adopted the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (P.L. 1005, No. 205, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.101 et seq.). The Act established mandatory actuarial reporting and funding requirements and a uniform basis for the distribution of state aid to Pennsylvania's public pension plans. Section 402(j) of Act 205 specifically requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to make an audit of every municipality which receives general municipal pension system state aid and of every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system state aid is deposited.

Annual state aid allocations are provided from a 2 percent foreign (out-of-state) casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign (out-of-state) fire insurance tax designated for paid firefighters and any investment income earned on the collection of these taxes. Generally, municipal pension plans established prior to December 18, 1984, are eligible for state aid. For municipal pension plans established after that date, the sponsoring municipality must fund the plan for three plan years before it becomes eligible for state aid. In accordance with Act 205, a municipality's annual state aid allocation cannot exceed its actual pension costs.

In addition to Act 205, the Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the former Public Employee Retirement Commission published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes including, but not limited to, the following:

Act 600 - Police Pension Fund Act, Act of May 29, 1956 (P.L. 1804, No. 600), as amended, 53 P.S. § 761 et seq.

The Bushkill Township Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 2015-5, adopted pursuant to Act 600. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the township and its police officers. The plan was established July 7, 1973. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of compensation to the plan; however, member contributions were reduced to 4 percent of compensation during the current audit period. As of December 31, 2017, the plan had 12 active members, 2 terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 4 retirees receiving pension benefits.

## **BACKGROUND – (Continued)**

As of December 31, 2017, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

### Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement	Age 50 and 25 years of service.
Early Retirement	None
Vesting	A member is 100% vested after 12 years of service.

### Retirement Benefit:

Benefit equals 50% of final 36 months average salary, plus a service increment of \$100 per month for each year of service in excess of 25 years, up to a maximum of \$500 per month.

### Survivor Benefit:

Before Retirement Eligibility	Refund of member contributions plus interest.
After Retirement Eligibility	A monthly benefit equal to 50% of the pension the member was receiving or was entitled to receive on the day of the member's death.

### Service Related Disability Benefit:

Benefit equals 50% of the member's salary at the time the disability was incurred, offset by Social Security disability benefits received for the same injury.

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendation

Bushkill Township has complied with the prior audit recommendation concerning the following:

- Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Overpayment Of State Aid

During the current audit period, the township reimbursed \$7,842 to the Commonwealth for the overpayment of state aid received in 2015 and complied with the instructions that accompanied Certification Form AG 385 and accurately reported the required data.



BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

The supplementary information contained on Pages 4 through 7 reflects the implementation of GASB Statement No. 67, *Financial Reporting for Pension Plans*. The objective of this statement is to improve financial reporting by state and local governmental pension plans.

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET PENSION  
LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS  
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014 AND 2015

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Total Pension Liability		
Service cost	\$ 134,759	\$ 169,241
Interest	218,003	234,013
Difference between expected and actual experience	-	(164,992)
Changes of assumptions	-	57,926
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(66,274)	(67,157)
Net Change in Total Pension Liability	<u>286,488</u>	<u>229,031</u>
Total Pension Liability – Beginning	2,805,084	3,091,572
Total Pension Liability – Ending (a)	<u>\$ 3,091,572</u>	<u>\$ 3,320,603</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position		
Contributions – Employer	\$ 104,953	\$ 99,663
Contributions – State Aid	63,620	79,882
Contributions – Member	36,594	40,797
Net investment income	124,937	(48,051)
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(66,274)	(67,157)
Administrative expense	(5,675)	(5,875)
Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position	<u>258,155</u>	<u>99,259</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Beginning	2,503,810	2,761,965
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Ending (b)	<u>\$ 2,761,965</u>	<u>\$ 2,861,224</u>
Net Pension Liability – Ending (a-b)	<u>\$ 329,607</u>	<u>\$ 459,379</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability	89.3%	86.2%
Estimated Covered Employee Payroll	\$ 747,760	\$ 950,000
Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll	44.1%	48.4%

\* 2014 employer contributions include payment of an outstanding MMO in the amount of \$13,317 previously noted in the prior audit report.

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET PENSION  
LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS  
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2017

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Total Pension Liability		
Service Cost	\$ 176,857	\$ 172,156
Interest	258,661	283,205
Difference between expected and actual experience	-	(11,228)
Change of assumptions	-	8,686
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	<u>(97,301)</u>	<u>(104,731)</u>
Net Change in Total Pension Liability	338,217	348,088
Total Pension Liability – Beginning	<u>3,320,603</u>	<u>3,658,820</u>
Total Pension Liability – Ending (a)	<u>\$ 3,658,820</u>	<u>\$ 4,006,908</u>
 Plan Fiduciary Net Position		
Contributions – Employer	\$ 76,368	\$ 46,377
Contributions – State Aid	97,388	119,295
Contributions – Member	40,984	40,372
Net investment income	183,762	487,883
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(97,301)	(104,731)
Administrative expense	<u>(5,500)</u>	<u>(6,250)</u>
Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position	295,701	582,946
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Beginning	<u>2,861,224</u>	<u>3,156,925</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Ending (b)	<u>\$ 3,156,925</u>	<u>\$ 3,739,871</u>
 Net Pension Liability – Ending (a-b)	<u>\$ 501,895</u>	<u>\$ 267,037</u>
 Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability	86.3%	93.3%
 Estimated Covered Employee Payroll	\$ 1,025,000	\$ 975,000
 Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll	49.0%	27.4%

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
 (UNAUDITED)

Sensitivity of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate

The following presents the net pension liability of the township as of December 31, 2015, 2016, and 2017 calculated using the discount rate of 7.5%, as well as what the township's net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1 percentage-point lower or 1 percentage-point higher than the current rate:

	1% Decrease (6.5%)	Current Discount Rate (7.5%)	1% Increase (8.5%)
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/15	\$ 941,087	\$ 459,379	\$ 58,413
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/16	\$ 1,029,614	\$ 501,895	\$ 62,162
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/17	\$ 835,736	\$ 267,037	\$ (207,617)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	Actuarially Determined Contribution	Actual Contributions	Contribution Deficiency (Excess)	Covered- Employee Payroll	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered- Employee Payroll
2008	\$ 64,918	\$ 65,037	\$ (119)	\$ 578,184	11.2%
2009	55,328	56,328	(1,000)	622,805	9.0%
2010	105,050	106,240	(1,190)	668,373	15.9%
2011	113,205	113,205	-	750,000	15.1%
2012	118,563	123,982	(5,419)	740,000	16.8%
2013	123,982	123,982	-	787,000	15.8%
2014	155,256	155,256	-	747,760	20.8%
2015	179,545	179,545	-	950,000	18.9%
2016	173,756	173,756	-	1,025,000	17.0%
2017	165,672	165,672	-	975,000	17.0%

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENT RETURNS

Annual Money-Weighted Rate of Return, Net of Investment Expense:

2014	5.06%
2015	(1.73%)
2016	6.43%
2017	15.56%

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
 (UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS

Historical trend information about the plan is presented herewith as supplementary information. It is intended to help users assess the plan’s funding status on a going-concern basis, assess progress made in accumulating assets to pay benefits when due, and make comparisons with other state and local government retirement systems.

The actuarial information is required by Act 205 biennially. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2013, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Accrued Liability (AAL) - Entry Age (b)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability (b) - (a)	Funded Ratio (a)/(b)
01-01-13	\$ 2,100,463	\$ 2,640,325	\$ 539,862	79.6%
01-01-15	2,682,776	2,984,506	301,730	89.9%
01-01-17	3,357,664	3,688,197	330,533	91.0%

Note: The market values of the plan’s assets at 01-01-13, 01-01-15 and 01-01-17 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 5-year averaging period which will be limited to a maximum of 120 percent and a minimum of 80 percent of fair market value of assets. This method will lower contributions in years of less than expected returns and increase contributions in years of greater than expected returns. The net effect over long periods of time is to have less variance in contribution levels from year to year.

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

The comparability of trend information is affected by changes in actuarial assumptions, benefit provisions, actuarial funding methods, accounting policies, and other changes. Those changes usually affect trends in contribution requirements and in ratios that use the actuarial accrued liability as a factor.

Analysis of the dollar amount of the actuarial value of assets, actuarial accrued liability, and unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability in isolation can be misleading. Expressing the actuarial value of assets as a percentage of the actuarial accrued liability (Column 4) provides one indication of the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis. Analysis of this percentage, over time, indicates whether the system is becoming financially stronger or weaker. Generally, the greater this percentage, the stronger the plan.

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES  
(UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the supplementary schedules was determined as part of the actuarial valuation at the date indicated. Additional information as of the latest actuarial valuation date follows:

Actuarial valuation date	January 1, 2017
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	9 years
Asset valuation method	5-year smoothing, the actuarial value of assets will be limited to a maximum of 120% and a minimum of 80% of the fair market value of assets
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.5%
Projected salary increases	4.5%
Cost-of-living adjustments	3.0%

BUSHKILL TOWNSHIP POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

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

**Mr. Brien Kocher**  
Chairman, Board of Township Supervisors

**Mr. Jason Smith**  
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**Ms. Julianne Bender**  
Township Supervisor

**Ms. Carolyn Hill**  
Township Supervisor

**Mr. Harrison Kline, Jr.**  
Township Supervisor

**Ms. Belinda Roberts**  
Secretary/Treasurer

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