

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

City of McKeesport Combined Pension Plan Allegheny County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021

November 2022



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL

The Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of McKeesport
Allegheny County
McKeesport, PA 15132

We have conducted a compliance audit of the City of McKeesport Combined Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (Act 205 of 1984, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.402(j)), which requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to audit every municipality which receives general municipal pension system state aid and every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system state aid is deposited. The audit was not conducted, nor was it required to be, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We planned and performed the 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 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 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 plan members who retired and the plan member who elected to vest during the current audit period, and through the completion of our fieldwork procedures, 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 pension benefits due to the retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid or payable to the recipients.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2019 and January 1, 2021 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2020 and 2022, 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 pension plan is in compliance with Act 205 for distressed municipalities through inquiry of plan officials and evaluation of the recovery remedies implemented during the audit period and through the completion of our fieldwork procedures.
- 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.

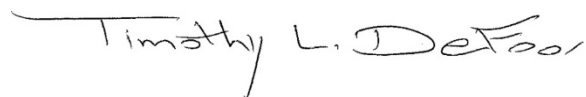
The City of McKeesport contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2020, which are available at the city's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

City officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the City of McKeesport Combined Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. As previously described, we tested transactions, interviewed selected officials, and performed procedures to the extent necessary 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 City of McKeesport Combined 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 the City of McKeesport and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank city officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
November 10, 2022

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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.

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 City of McKeesport Combined Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations 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 67 - The Third Class City Code, Act of November 24, 2015 (P.L. 242, No. 67),
as amended, 11 Pa. C.S. § 10101 et seq.

The City of McKeesport Combined Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 06-09, as amended, adopted pursuant to Act 67. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the city and its non-uniformed employees hired after January 1, 1994. The plan was established September 24, 1987. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of base pay to the plan. As of December 31, 2021, the plan had 30 active members, 8 terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 18 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED PENSION PLAN
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Compliance With Prior Recommendation

The City of McKeesport has complied with the prior recommendation concerning the following:

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

During the current audit period, municipal officials complied with the instructions that accompany Certification Form AG 385 and accurately reported the required pension data.

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED 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, 2017, 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)
01-01-17	\$ 6,010,722	\$ 7,374,783	\$ 1,364,061	81.5%
01-01-19	7,147,599	8,112,685	965,086	88.1%
01-01-21	8,647,122	8,480,090	(167,032)	102.0%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-17, 01-01-19, and 01-01-21 are valued using the smoothing method described in Section 210 of Act 205, as amended, subject to a ceiling of 120 percent of the market value of the assets. These methods 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.

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED 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.

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED PENSION PLAN
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
 (UNAUDITED)

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
2012	\$ 93,573	\$ 93,573	\$ -	\$1,861,692	5.03%
2013	119,509	119,509	-	1,715,348	6.97%
2014	111,348	111,348	-	1,776,624	6.27%
2015**	131,062	-	131,062	1,796,282	0.00%
2016**	283,309	283,309	-	1,850,285	15.31%
2017	316,487	316,487	-	1,744,178	18.15%
2018	297,420	297,420	-	1,615,381	18.41%
2019	375,125	375,125	-	1,455,576	25.77%
2020	357,047	357,047	-	1,314,636	27.16%
2021	326,279	326,279	-		

* Due to the timing of this audit, covered-employee payroll for 2021 was not provided in this schedule.

** Due to severe financial distress, the city did not have funds available to pay its required obligation for 2015. However, outstanding obligation, along with applicable interest, was added to the 2016 required obligation and deposited during 2016.

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED 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, 2021
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Not applicable
Remaining amortization period	None
Asset valuation method	Plan assets are valued using the method describe in Section 210 of Act 205, as amended, subject to a ceiling of 120% of the market value of assets.
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.75%
Projected salary increases	4.00%

CITY OF MCKEESPORT COMBINED PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Honorable Michael E. Cherepko
Mayor

Mr. Richard J. Dellapenna
Council President

Ms. Tasha L. Johnson-Phelps
Finance Director

Ms. Annette James
City Clerk

Mr. Ryan Sturgess
City Controller

Mr. Thomas Maglicco
City Administrator

Ms. Barbara Evans
Deputy Treasurer

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.