



Washington State Auditor's Office

Independence • Respect • Integrity

Accountability Audit Report **Thurston County**

For the period January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014

Published July 6, 2015

Report No. 1014536





Washington State Auditor's Office

July 6, 2015

Board of Commissioners
Thurston County
Olympia, Washington

Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The State Auditor's Office takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for County operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

The attached comprises our report on the County's compliance and safeguarding of public resources. Our independent audit report describes the overall results and conclusions for areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and we value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

JAN M. JUTTE, CPA, CGFM
ACTING STATE AUDITOR
OLYMPIA, WA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Audit Summary	4
Related Reports	5
Information About The County	6
About The State Auditor's Office	7

AUDIT SUMMARY

Results in brief

In the areas we audited, County operations complied with applicable requirements and provided adequate safeguarding of public resources. The County also complied with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures in the areas we examined.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of Thurston County from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

Our audit involved performing procedures to obtain evidence about the County's uses of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity or area. Instead, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. The following areas were examined during this audit period:

- General revenues and expenditures
- Open Public Meetings Act
- Equipment rental and revolving fund
- Significant internal controls over procurement, payroll, travel, credit card disbursements, and cash receipting for certain departments
- Capital assets inventory
- Third party cash receipting
- Assessor's Office
- Treasurer's investments
- Procurement – public works projects
- On-call contracts
- Financial condition

RELATED REPORTS

Financial

Our opinion on the County's financial statements and compliance with federal grant program requirements is provided in a separate report issued in June 2015, which includes the County's financial statements. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

Federal grant programs

We evaluated internal controls and tested compliance with the federal program requirements, as applicable, for the County's major federal programs, which are listed in the Federal Summary section of the financial statement and single audit report issued in June 2015. That report includes federal findings regarding internal controls and compliance over reporting on the County's Community Development Block Grant and Home Investment Partnership Program. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUNTY

Thurston County covers the southern region of Puget Sound, serving more than 260,000 residents. Its mission is to provide quality, timely and responsive service to its residents in the most cost-effective manner. These services include public safety (sheriff, judicial and emergency services), construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, sanitation facilities, health and social services, culture and recreation facilities and activities, water quality, flood control, planning and zoning services and general administration services.

An elected, three-member Board of Commissioners is the primary policy-making body, exercising budgetary and financial control for the County. Additional independently elected officials, together with other departments, administer the County's daily operations as well as its 1,100 full-time employees. For fiscal year 2014, the County had a general fund operating expenditures budget of \$86.9 million.

Contact information related to this report	
Address:	Thurston County 2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W. Olympia, WA 98502-6001
Contact:	Darren Bennett, Financial Services Manager
Telephone:	(360) 867-2253
Website:	www.co.thurston.wa.us

Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for Thurston County at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the state's Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the citizens of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with our audit clients and citizens to achieve our vision of government that works for citizens, by helping governments work better, cost less, deliver higher value, and earn greater public trust.

In fulfilling our mission to hold state and local governments accountable for the use of public resources, we also hold ourselves accountable by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency and developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an elected agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits and investigations. Our audits are designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state, and local laws.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with state, federal and local laws on the part of all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits of state agencies and local governments as well as [fraud](#), state [whistleblower](#) and [citizen hotline](#) investigations.

The results of our work are widely distributed through a variety of reports, which are available on our [website](#) and through our free, electronic [subscription](#) service.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously, and provide training and technical assistance to governments, and have an extensive quality assurance program.

Contact information for the State Auditor's Office	
Deputy Director for Communications	Thomas Shapley Thomas.Shapley@sao.wa.gov (360) 902-0367
Public Records requests	PublicRecords@sao.wa.gov
Main telephone	(360) 902-0370
Toll-free Citizen Hotline	(866) 902-3900
Website	www.sao.wa.gov