
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF THE **AUDITOR GENERAL**



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Auditor General DeFoor Says Audit Finds Weakness in PDA's Oversight of Elder Abuse Investigations; CAPE Monitoring Process Must Improve to Keep Older Pennsylvanians Safe

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Timothy L. DeFoor today released a [performance audit of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging](#) (PDA), finding weaknesses in how it monitors elder abuse investigations performed by the Commonwealth's 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and how it trains front-line staff.

“Older Pennsylvanians are falling through the cracks of a system that is designed to protect them,” Auditor General DeFoor said. “Older Pennsylvanians should be our priority. We are not hitting the mark. We need to do better and we can do better; I think everyone can agree on that.”

The purpose of the audit was to determine if PDA properly monitored AAA investigations of elder abuse and mistreatment and to ensure AAA protective services staff met the minimum training requirements under the law and regulations. PDA uses its Comprehensive Aging Performance Evaluation (CAPE) monitoring system to streamline oversight of AAA's investigations and assess compliance. CAPE, which replaces the previous Legacy Monitoring System, was piloted by PDA in 2024 and fully implemented in 2025.

The audit period was Jan. 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The 10 findings include:

- **Finding 1:** PDA's monitoring process does not effectively assess risk or detect when older adults are left at risk of harm and mistreatment.
- **Finding 2:** PDA's follow-up processes and record retention period provide limited oversight and may leave older adults at risk of harm and mistreatment.
- **Finding 3:** PDA needs stronger oversight of death reviews, caseload monitoring, and reassessments to better protect older adults.
- **Finding 4:** PDA considered the 20-day investigation timeframe, a key performance measure required by its own regulations, as merely a goal and not a requirement.
- **Finding 5:** Lack of a time limit for financial exploitation investigations increases the risk of harm to older adults.
- **Finding 6:** PDA failed to conduct required annual evaluations of AAAs and provide public access to written reports of those results as required by statute.
- **Finding 7:** Reporting deficiencies related to the reliability and accuracy of monitoring results caused a lack of accountability and public transparency.

- **Finding 8:** PDA did not implement appropriate quality assurance controls for its CAPE tool.
- **Finding 9:** Addressing deficiencies related to CAPE monitoring would strengthen PDA's oversight of AAAs.
- **Finding 10:** PDA's failure to ensure comprehensive staff training by AAAs, combined with a lack of monitoring procedures, creates a competency gap that could leave older Pennsylvanians at risk.

Auditors provided 39 recommendations to PDA for improvements and three recommendations to the legislature to strengthen the Older Adults Protective Services Act.

Recommendations included ways to address weaknesses related to identifying older adults left at risk in CAPE and the information made publicly available through PDA's website; address the length of time it takes to conduct an investigation; strengthening the record retention processes; and improve training.

Auditor General DeFoor noted that PDA did not agree with the findings but has implemented some of the audit's recommendations made during the auditing process.

"PDA shouldn't like this audit, but it should be willing to use it as a tool to strengthen oversight of AAAs," Auditor General DeFoor said. "CAPE needs to be better."

Auditor General DeFoor also noted that PDA stalled the release of the audit by approximately six months. There were delays in providing his department with documents; identifying employees responsible for program oversight; and scheduling meetings with PDA staff to conduct interviews.

[Visit our Be Audit Smart Guide](#) to see the full audit and a breakdown of this performance audit.

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