

Welcome to the first edition of the Office of the State Auditor newsletter - The Auditor's Report.

# THE AUDITOR'S REPORT



## News & Updates

from the Office of the State Auditor Suzanne M. Bump

*Making Government Work Better*



*Suzanne M. Bump*  
**State Auditor**



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Dear Friend,

I am excited to share with you today the first edition of the Office of the State Auditor newsletter.

When I stepped into the role of Auditor, my vision was for the office to serve as a catalyst for government to work better. The goal of this newsletter is to share with you the work that we are doing at the OSA and to create new opportunities for collaboration so that we can work together to do just that.

The work of the OSA is distinct in that it touches on all facets of state government and grants us a unique perspective into how government is working. I look forward to using this newsletter not only as a forum to share this perspective with you, but also as a way to open up a dialogue with service providers, residents, and other officials about our work and how it can be used to help all of state government work better.

Thank you,

Suzanne M. Bump  
*Auditor of the Commonwealth*



# OSA work making headlines

## [OUR OPINION: 3 people who are using their offices to help end addiction crisis](#)

Since 2011, Auditor Bump and OSA staff have been working to enhance the organization's data analytics capacity, which would enable audit staff to review large quantities of data quickly to discern trends and patterns. The OSA is looking at how to utilize this capability to help analyze MassHealth data to track the prescription of opioids.



## [Auditor: Ride company over-billed state in 'deliberate wrongdoing'](#)

Auditor Bump called for MassHealth to recover more than \$16 million in potentially fraudulent charges made by a wheelchair-van provider that charged for members who did not need or did not use wheelchairs. MassHealth payments to the vendor, Rite Way, LLC. during 2013 and 2014 totaled almost nine times the payments made to the next highest paid provider. MassHealth has suspended payments to Rite Way.

## [OPINION: To fix DCF, first transform the culture](#)

In this opinion piece for the Boston Globe, Auditor Bump writes how entrenched, systemic issues hinder state agencies' ability to achieve their mission. The piece references the OSA's 2014 audit of the Department of Children and Families' foster care program to illustrate how opportunities for greater collaboration can help support the agency's mission to keep kids safe.

## [State report confirms Brockton collecting excise taxes on homeless-in-hotels payments](#)

In 2011, Auditor Bump determined that the state's participation in the federal McKinney-Vento program was an [unfunded mandate](#), and the state should provide additional funding for local school districts to cover the cost of transportation for homeless students living in temporary accommodations outside the school district. Since then, the Legislature has allocated funds toward McKinney-Vento costs, but the amount has dwindled each year. This year, [DLM followed-up on that determination](#), and found \$1.7 million in potentially lost excise tax revenue for cities and towns participating in the Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Emergency Assistance program in addition to other findings. Following the report's release, DHCD swiftly implemented DLM's recommendation to verify excise tax collection for participating communities, and issued its first report on those revenues in November.

[Read more coverage of OSA's work](#)



## Accountability in Action: Using Data to Make Government Work Better

In October, Auditor Bump and staff were invited to present about the OSA's advanced data analytics capacity to members of the Association of Government Accountants - Albuquerque, NM Chapter. The presentation highlighted how the organization has made strategic investments in technology and training to analyze data and identify the greatest areas of risk in state agencies and programs.

OSA's sophisticated data analytics tools enable staff to move past sampling - using a small number of items from a wide array of data - in audit and other work to get a much broader look across a whole system or activity. In doing so, staff can better discern patterns and relationships to get to the root causes of delays, inefficiencies, failures, operation deficiencies and other phenomena, and propose meaningful recommendations that address these issues.

The content of our audits can sometimes be tough to digest. To address this, each newsletter will include the definition of a word that regularly occurs in our work products in an effort to make it easier for you to read our audit work and understand what it means for state government.

You can also look forward to seeing this content on [twitter](#) and [facebook](#) using the hashtag #wonkywordwednesday.

### *Audit:*

(n) a systemic examination & verification processes used by independent, trained people to gather information about an organization or project, to make judgement and reach conclusions on the effectiveness of the subject. They can provide insight on financial conditions, operations, controls, and performance, as well as proposing solutions to the problems identified.

*Making government work better*

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The Auditor's Report

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