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Applicability: DDSN Central Office, DDSN Regional Centers, DSN
County Boards, Contracted Service Providers

INTERNAL AUDITING AND THE ROLE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Internal Auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, governance, and the implementation of best practices. South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) recognizes the importance of internal auditing and bases its approach on the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* and the *Professional Practices Framework* as developed and maintained by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

AUTHORITY

It is the policy of DDSN to establish and support an Internal Audit Division as an independent appraisal function to examine and evaluate Agency and provider activities as a service to Executive Management and the DDSN Commission.

The State Director shall appoint the Director of Internal Audit. The Director of Internal Audit

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shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration and operation of the Internal Audit Division, subject to policies, rules and regulations adopted by the State Director and the Finance/Audit Committee of the DDSN Commission.

Subject to the approval of the State Director, the Director of Internal Audit shall prescribe the organizational structure and the personnel necessary to carry out the Internal Audit function.

The Director of Internal Audit reports administratively to the State Director and functionally to the Finance/Audit Committee of the DDSN Commission.

An annual audit plan will be developed by the Director of Internal Audit and submitted for review to the State Director. If adjustments are necessary due to changes in needs or priorities of the Agency, the changes will be coordinated with affected personnel.

In carrying out their responsibilities, members of the Internal Audit Division will have full, free, and unrestricted access to all Agency and service provider organizations' activities, records, property and personnel, and to the Finance/Audit Committee of the Commission, as necessary.

Internal Audit is a staff function and as such does not have any responsibility or authority over areas that are being audited; therefore, any review or recommendation by Internal Audit will not in any way relieve the supervisor of the assigned responsibilities inherent with his/her position.

PURPOSE

The primary objective of the Internal Audit Division is to assist members of management in the effective discharge of their responsibilities by reviewing activities/programs and providing analyses, recommendations, and information regarding the activities reviewed. The reviews are conducted to assure DDSN and its provider organizations comply with applicable State/Federal laws, standards, directives, policies, procedures and regulations. As such, the Internal Audit Division is concerned with all phases of DDSN and its provider organizations' operations. To this end, the Internal Audit Division will:

- 1) determine the adequacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of systems of internal accounting and operating controls;
- 2) determine the consistency with established goals and objectives;
- 3) review the reliability and integrity of financial information;
- 4) determine the means of safeguarding assets and consumer funds; and
- 5) review compliance with plans, procedures, laws, and regulations.

ACTIVITIES

Specific internal audit responsibilities are as follows:

1. Perform scheduled audits of service provider organizations, DDSN Regional Centers, and

DDSN Central Office for the effectiveness of operations and compliance with established standards.

2. Perform special request audits in response to allegations/complaints/concerns of a financial or programmatic nature.
3. Provide consultation, technical assistance, and training to DDSN District Offices, DDSN Regional Centers and the service provider organizations.
4. Review, evaluate, and follow up on internal audit findings and recommendations with appropriate management staff.
5. Coordinate internal audit efforts with those of the Office of the State Auditor and other external auditors/reviewers.
6. Report to the DDSN Commission as requested to outline internal audit activities and review completed reports.

AUDIT PROCESS/STEPS

Internal audits will be conducted in accordance with this policy and with the procedures outlined in the DDSN *Audit Procedures Manual*. Generally, an audit of any activity or facility will consist of the following steps with the exception for special audits (i.e., cash related, suspected fraud, etc.) which will be conducted on a no-notice or short notice basis.

1. When practical (i.e., time or type of audit), an engagement memo will be issued prior to a scheduled audit. The purpose of the engagement memo is to notify management of the area to be reviewed, describe the audit to be performed, and to request items needed at the onset of the review. If time does not permit, management will be notified by telephone and/or e-mail as soon as possible.
2. Preliminary planning consists of consideration being given to: any prior audit results (if applicable); internal controls; record keeping employed; documentary evidence required (i.e., required by policy, procedure, law, regulation, etc.); applicable policies and procedures; prior reviews by external and internal parties; and the type of report to be issued.
3. An audit program will be developed based on decisions reached during the preliminary planning. The program will be modified as dictated by discoveries made during the audit.
4. An entrance conference will be conducted between the auditor and management of the work unit(s) to be reviewed to discuss the nature of the audit, the areas to be audited, and the support required.

5. Fieldwork will consist of inquiry of appropriate personnel, observation of applicable activities, and examination of applicable records and documents. Fieldwork will depend on the type of audit being performed as well as the type of activity, operation, or program being reviewed.
6. The auditor will conduct an exit conference with management at the conclusion of the fieldwork to discuss the results of the audit. The exit conference should be a summary of concerns noted during the review that were communicated to auditee management throughout the engagement.
7. Findings will be documented after the completion of the fieldwork. These draft findings will be sent to the appropriate manager for the area being audited with a request that the findings be reviewed and corrective action plans be submitted to Internal Audit within 30 calendar days.

REPORTING

A draft report will be issued upon receipt of an acceptable corrective action plan; the draft will then be forwarded to the auditee for a final review for completeness and accuracy with follow-up to Internal Audit staff regarding any corrections/concerns detailed in the draft report.

Upon receiving the auditee's corrective action plan, Internal Audit staff will review actions to ensure satisfactory disposition of the audit findings and recommendations. If a corrective action plan is considered unsatisfactory, Internal Audit staff will hold further discussions to achieve acceptable disposition. If a mutually acceptable corrective action plan cannot be attained, an auditor's comment may be noted in the final report.

Once the draft report is accepted by both parties, a final report will be issued which incorporates the findings and submitted corrective action plans.

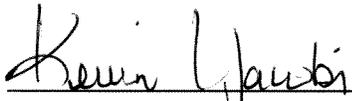
The results of formal audits and/or investigations will be reported to appropriate management based on the entity reviewed. In almost all cases (exceptions being criminal cases where Internal Audit staff is assisting law enforcement and is precluded from discussing the review based on the signing of non-disclosure statements), audit reports will be shared with the DDSN State Director, DDSN Commissioners, appropriate DDSN management levels, and in the case of provider organizations, the Executive Director and members of the organizations' governing board.

STATEMENT ON FRAUD

Auditors should be alert to situations (i.e., observations, informants) or transactions that could indicate actual or potential fraud or abuse, and consider extending audit steps and procedures, as necessary, to determine the effect of fraud on the audit results. The Audit Director should be made aware as soon as the auditor discovers potential or suspected fraud.

Auditors should exercise due professional care in pursuing indications of suspected fraudulent activity so as to avoid mistaken accusations or alerting suspected individuals and to not interfere with potential investigations or legal proceedings. If an auditor suspects fraud, embezzlement, or other possible criminal conduct, this should be discussed with the Auditor-In-Charge before proceeding further. The Auditor-In-Charge will in turn initiate a conference with the Audit Director and any other parties deemed appropriate (i.e., General Counsel). Depending on the extent and severity of the suspected fraud, appropriate reporting to the responsible entity (i.e., local law enforcement, SLED, etc.) will take place, and fieldwork in the area may be discontinued temporarily.

If the findings from an audit give the auditor reason to believe that fraud may have occurred in the Medicaid program, under the Code of Federal Regulations, 42 CFR §455.15, then the case must be referred to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) in the South Carolina State Attorney General's Office.



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