

Fiftieth Annual Report

Sixty-Seventh Legislature
2025 General Session

Office of the Legislative
Auditor General



Letter from the Auditor General

Dear Legislators,

We are excited to share the accomplishments and ongoing efforts of the Office of the Legislative Auditor General. Our mission guides us—*Audit, Lead, Achieve—We Help Organizations Improve*. We remain committed to helping organizations improve through impactful audits, meaningful leadership, and a steadfast dedication to excellence.

In 2024, our team completed 26 audits, a new record! Through these audits, we strive to inform the critical needs of the Legislature and the public. Each of our organizational divisions completed impactful, comprehensive audits.

Performance Audit completed 15 audits and was able to inform some of the most critical issues facing Utah, including consolidating behavioral health governance, further securing elections, reforming higher education, and helping UTA innovate.

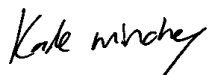
Government Excellence completed four efficiency evaluations, conducted training on best practices, coordinated strategic planning, and began work on strengthening internal audit and building capacity for better evaluations.

Education Excellence completed seven audits, also a record number for the division. These audits reviewed both statewide systems and local education agencies, all with a focus on improving student growth and achievement.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are renewing our strategic plan to ensure that we continue to meet the evolving needs of our stakeholders. This plan will focus on three key priorities (1) strengthening core auditing competencies, (2) empowering OLAG leaders, and (3) maximizing our impact.

We thank you for your continued trust and support. None of this could be possible without you.

Sincerely,



Auditor General
Office of the Legislative Auditor General



State of Utah Office of the Legislative Auditor General

Introduction

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The Utah State Legislature created the Office of the Legislative Auditor General (OLAG) in 1975. OLAG has constitutional authority to audit any branch, department, agency, or political subdivision of the state.

The Legislative Auditor General is a constitutionally created position with a six-year term of appointment. The Auditor General reports directly to the Legislative Audit Subcommittee of the Legislative Management Committee. The committee is a six-member committee composed of the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and the House Majority and Minority Leaders.

What Does the Office of the Legislative Auditor General Do?

OLAG has the constitutional authority to audit any state agency, local government entity, or any entity that receives public funds. These audits review entities for efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance with legal requirements. Audits take, on average, 9 months depending on the scope and complexity of the audit. The office completes one annual in-depth budget review of both a state agency and a local education agency.

How Are Audits Initiated?

Any legislator can make an audit request by writing a letter to the Legislative Audit Subcommittee identifying specific issues of concern that the audit should address. Legislators can contact OLAG for assistance with these letters. While a letter of request can originate from one legislator, the request may have a higher likelihood of prioritization if it is signed by a group of legislators. Issues typically given the highest priority are those that have the potential for a significant statewide impact and those that are likely to be addressed by the Legislature during the next session.

What Is the Audit Process?

Once an audit is staffed, the team conducts an introductory meeting with the auditee. Auditors then conduct a risk assessment to identify areas with the highest potential for impactful recommendations leading to improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance. Auditors conduct interviews, gather and analyze data, and review relevant statute and other standards to support the team's findings and recommendations. Throughout the audit process, the team strives to work collaboratively and openly with the auditee.

Download Audit Reports



Inside the Annual Report

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Audit Subcommittee

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Senator Kirk Cullimore

Senate Majority Leader

Senator Luz Escamilla

Senate Minority Leader

Speaker Mike Schultz, Co-Chair

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Representative Jefferson Moss

House Majority Leader

Representative Angela Romero

House Minority Leader

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Auditor Staff

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— Audit Intern—

Delaney Rasband

Kitty Mui

LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR GENERAL



1975 - 2025

On March 15th 1975, the Office of the Legislative Auditor General was established. 50 years later, OLAG continues to audit, lead, and achieve as we work to help organizations improve. For more information on OLAG's history visit olag.utah.gov



THE MISSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR GENERAL IS TO

AUDIT · LEAD · ACHIEVE

WE HELP ORGANIZATIONS IMPROVE

Audit

- ▶ *A Performance Audit of Space Utilization by the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind* answered lingering questions about how their building needs are assessed. We determined that more planning would have led to better prioritization and building usage. In response, the Legislature required USDB to create a master plan and feasibility study, which has now been completed
- ▶ *A Performance of San Juan County Commission* found concerns with how some San Juan County Commission meetings and matters were handled. In 2024, HB36 addressed issues related to audit recommendations to minimize the potential misuse and misapplication of the Open and Public Meetings Act.

In 2024 the Office of the Legislative Auditor General (OLAG) completed 26 audits:

- 25 audits
- 1 special project

Lead

- ▶ *A Performance Audit of Utah's Behavioral Health System; A Case for Governance, Strategic Planning, and Accountability* recommended the creation of a central authority to oversee behavioral health operations. This is an opportunity for Utah to lead out in modeling the importance of good governance and planning for the rest of the country.
- ▶ *Utah's Water Management: Ensuring Data integrity, Program Best Practices, and Comprehensive Water Planning* found that collaboration and coordination are vital to ensure comprehensive planning efforts and to avoid overlap. The Legislature, in line with recommendations from this audit, modified provisions related to the formulation of a state water plan to ensure the state's Division of Water Resources leads the planning efforts and related entities cooperate.

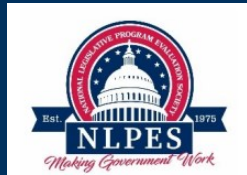
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Office Impact

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2024 Certificate of Impact

The National Legislative Program Evaluation Society awarded this certificate of impact for *A Performance Audit of the Intermountain Power Agency* in recognition of its significant impact on public policy.



Achieve

- ▶ *A Performance Audit of the Utah State Correctional Facility* found that the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) had failed to prioritize, plan, and execute an adequate hiring and retention plan for the new Utah State Correctional Facility (USCF). The audit recommended that UDC prioritize recruitment and retention of correctional officers and made recommendations to improve staffing levels at the facility. UDC reports that it expects to have full staffing for the USCF by April 2025.
- ▶ *A Performance Audit of Student Performance on Statewide Tests: The Importance of Focusing on Underperforming Student Groups* reviewed how traditionally underperforming student groups currently compare to their peers and found that the gap between groups is alarming. The audit suggests best practices from higher performing LEAs that could help these students gain educational growth and achievement.

The Practice Handbook

The Best Practice Handbook continues to positively impact Utah government. In 2024, OLAG was invited by the Governor to train himself and his cabinet. We also reconvened a cabinet workbook to develop new applications and tools to go along the best practices. In addition, the Department of Health and Human Services adopted the Best Practice Toolbox as part of its “Audit-Ready Initiative.”

In the 2024 General Session, Senate Bill 154 passed, requiring independent entities to utilize our best practice assessments and submit their results to the governor and a consensus group. The group then produces a report that goes to the Legislative Management Committee, the Audit Subcommittee, and the Executive Appropriations Committee to take action on the findings.

This year our staff were invited to Washington D.C. to present at the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. And we’ve been recognized by and presented to the Governing for Results national network.

Notable Document Award



The National Conference of State Legislatures and the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Association awarded this notable document award in recognition for *The Best Practice Handbook: A Practical Guide to Excellence for Utah Government*.

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Legislative Action Items

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Based on issues addressed and recommendations made in our 2022, 2023, and 2024 audits, we believe the Legislature should consider the following items during the 2025 General Session.

We recognize that whether the Legislature chooses to act on the following items depends on legislative policy decisions that are outside the audit arena.

■ 2024-12: A Performance Audit of the Trust System Entities: Improving Oversight Over Beneficiary Spending

The lack of strong statutory guidance or sufficient oversight has contributed to a varied use of trust land funds by beneficiaries. To address this, we provide a couple of options for the Legislature to consider. The Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Office (LTPAO) could be given clearer authority to lead in this area; however, we also found it difficult to document LTPAO's impact and value in helping the trust system achieve its purpose. Therefore, the Legislature could consider eliminating LTPAO and use a different entity to oversee the use of trust funds by beneficiaries.

■ 2024-16: A Performance Audit of Signature Verification Process

We reviewed the signature verification process on three statewide races to see if it produced accurate results or could be improved. Our audit work was conducted to improve the signature verification process moving forward. We recommend that the Legislature consider options for improving controls over the signature verification process and that the Legislature consider options to make signature verification for candidate petition packets more transparent.

■ 2023-10: High Risk List

We reported to the Audit Subcommittee a list of high-risk programs and operations. The Legislature should review current Legislative priorities in light of the 12 reported High Risk areas.

■ 2022-17: A Performance Audit of Utah's Election System and Controls

While we did not find significant fraud in Utah's election system, we found opportunities for state and local election officials to strengthen voter list maintenance, post-election auditing, and ballot chain of custody. We made recommendations for the Legislature to consider centralizing legal requirements for election data reporting, requiring regular and/or automated analysis of voter rolls by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, and clarifying language related to election video monitoring.

■ 2024-11: A Performance Audit of the Statewide Online Education

The Legislature should consider if courses offered by providers should be available to everyone in the state. The Legislature should also consider requiring documentation to ensure statutory provisions for enrollment in the SOEP and UtahFitsAll can be tracked and followed.

Based on issues addressed and recommendations made in our 2022, 2023, and 2024 audits, we believe the Legislature should consider the following items during the 2025 General Session.

We recognize that whether the Legislature chooses to act on the following items depends on legislative policy decisions that are outside the audit arena.

■ **2022-09: An In-Depth Budget Review of the Utah Insurance Department**

The Legislature should consider whether it is appropriate for the Captive Division to promote the industry given its role as regulator. There can be potential conflict of interest issues when the Utah Insurance Department's Captive Division is statutorily both the regulator and promoter of the captive insurance industry.

■ **2024-22: A Performance Audit of the Utah System of Higher Education**

In this audit, we found that the system should be more coordinated in roles, planning, and programs offered. We recommend that the Legislature should consider requiring the Utah Board of Higher Education to perform ongoing review of programs, administration, and other operational efficiencies within the Utah System of Higher Education.

■ **2024-24: A Performance Audit of the OpenEd Program Reviewing Educational Service Provider Funding and Improving Oversight**

In this review of the OpenEd Program, we outline four potential policy options that the Legislature should consider for funding and oversight of the OpenEd Program, including (1) maintain current funding structure, (2) evaluate funding mechanisms for full-time Educational Service Provider students, (3) have USBE oversee full-time Educational Service Providers under a statewide contract, or (4) move funding for Educational Service Providers to the Utah Fits All Scholarship.

■ **2024-18: A Performance Audit of Credit Card State Processing Fees**

In our review of the statewide contract, USHE institutions, and Local Education Authorities, we found that the Legislature should consider if it wants to add language to statute to create exemptions for LEAs and for USHE institutions to pass through credit card processing fees, regardless of the terms of the contract.



For a complete list of *legislative action items* visit our [Recommendation Status Dashboard](#).

14

Recommendations to:
Improve service
delivery

21

Recommendations to:
Improve reporting and
communication

27

Recommendations to:
Improve cost effectiveness
and resources use

89

Recommendations to:
Improve program
management

49

Recommendations for:
Legislative
Action

2024 Completed Audits

2024-1: Efficiency Evaluation Follow-Up: Transportation Technician Training Efficiency Evaluation

A follow up on the recommendations from the Transportation Technician Training Efficiency Evaluation.

► 2 Agency Recommendations

2024-02: A Performance Audit of Ogden-Hinckley Airport: An Examination of Airport Management, Finances, and Strategic Planning Best Practices

We reviewed the operational and fiscal health of Ogden-Hinckley Airport, finding that the implementation of local government best practices to improve oversight and monitoring of the airport's strategic plan could help ensure that investments at the airport yield commensurate returns.

► 6 Agency Recommendations

2024-03: A Performance Audit of Mineral Royalty Agreements: An Examination of Mineral Production on the Great Salt Lake

A review of mineral loyalty agreements and mineral extraction activities on the Great Salt Lake.

► 11 Agency Recommendations ► 1 Legislative Recommendation

2024-04: A Performance Audit of the Utah Transit Authority: An Evaluation of the Efficiency and Effectiveness of UTA's Governance and Planning

The evaluation of UTA's efficiency and effectiveness of their current governance model, the effectiveness of the relationships of planning organizations and cities, as well as, operations, and implementation of recommendations from the 2014 audit.

► 9 Agency Recommendations ► 1 Legislative Recommendation

2024 Completed Audits

2024-05: A Performance Audit of Utah's Property Tax System: A Case for Increased Accountability and Transparency

This report recommends that the Legislature should consider revising statute to improve the assessment and appeals process, increase access to data for county officials, and make the truth-in-taxation process easier for taxpayer participation.

► **5 Agency Recommendations** ► **16 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-06: An Initial Review of Merit Awards for Teachers: Best Practices to Inform Program Implementation

Utah State University's Center for the School of the Future can address potential hurdles to ensure the effective implementation of Utah's new teacher merit-award program under SB 173 Market Informed Compensation for Teachers.

► **4 Agency Recommendations**

2024-07: A Performance Audit of the Teacher and Student Program: A Policy Question of Oversight vs. Local Control

The Teacher and Student Success Program could benefit from increased oversight while still maintaining local control.

► **6 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-08: A Systemic Performance Audit of Juab School District: A Review of Teacher Experience, Student Achievement, and Statewide Online Education

This systemic performance audit is the fourth audit of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with a focus on teacher experience, student achievement, and the district's administration of one part of the Statewide Online Education Program (SOEP).

► **7 Agency Recommendations**

2024-09: Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Services Inventory Management Efficiency Evaluation

A follow up on the recommendations from the Inventory Management Efficiency Evaluation of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Services.

2024 Completed Audits

2024-10: A Systematic Performance Audit of the Rich School District: Addressing Improvements in Student Achievement, Strategic Planning, and Teacher Support Systems

A systematic audit of Rich School District that focused on student achievement, strategic planning, instructional coaching, and professional learning for teachers.

▶ **10 Agency Recommendations**

2024-11: A Performance Audit of the Statewide Online Education Program: A Case for Improving Program Oversight, the SEATS Tracking System, and Counselor Involvement

A systematic audit of the Statewide Online Education Program focused on enhancing program oversight and communication, improving the student enrollment and tracking system, and increasing LEA counselor involvement.

▶ **10 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **2 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-12: A Performance Audit of the Trust System Entities: Improving Oversight Over Beneficiary Spending

Guidelines can be provided for how non-public education beneficiaries use their funds and designating an entity to provide oversight over that use of funds; the Legislature should also consider clarifying LTPAO's role in the trust system or eliminating the office.

▶ **3 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **4 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-13: A Performance Audit of the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration: Improving Controls, Accountability, and Proactive Management

SITLA should take steps to improve its controls, accountability, and proactive management to improve the effectiveness and transparency of its operations.

▶ **11 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **1 Legislative Recommendation**

2024-14: A Performance Audit of Utah's Behavioral Health System: A Case for Governance, Strategic Planning, and Accountability

This audit makes the case for a greater centralized coordination and oversight of the larger behavioral health system in Utah.

▶ **8 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **4 Legislative Recommendations**

2024 Completed Audits

2024-15: A Review of Specific Nonprofit Pass-Through Grants: Current Contracts Largely in Compliance

Our review showed that current contracts with Hunter Nation, Atlantis USA Foundation, and The Best Defense Foundation are largely in compliance.

2024-16: A Performance Audit of the Signature Verification Process: Improving Controls and Transparency

We randomly tested signatures on three statewide races and found that an error rate should be factored into the signature verification process (and the required number of verified signatures moving forward).

▶ **5 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **2 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-17: 2nd Follow-Up of the Low-Cost IT Procurement Efficiency Evaluation

This second follow-up reports on the status of implementation for recommendations made in the efficiency evaluation. Of the five recommendations made, the Division of Technology Services has completed three.

2023-18: A Performance Audit of Credit Card State Processing Fees: A Review of the Statewide Contract, USHE Institutions, and Local Education Authorities

This audit examined credit card processing fees, along with associated fees paid by the state and its public and higher education entities

▶ **8 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **2 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-19: Emergency Medical Transportation: A Review of Accountability and Rate-Setting

The Bureau of Emergency Medical Services could improve processes for holding agencies accountable and their approach to setting rates for ground ambulance agencies throughout the state.

▶ **6 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **2 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-20: A Performance Audit of Utah's Election System: Strengthening Election Integrity

We conducted an audit of the 2024 election cycle following the passage of HB 269 which requires our office to audit Utah's election system every two years.

▶ **15 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **5 Legislative Recommendations**

2024 Completed Audits

2024-21: An In-Depth Follow-Up Audit of the Salt Lake City School District

This audit reports on the implementation status for recommendations made in the 2022 In-Depth Budget Review of the Salt Lake City School District audit and recommends that the Salt Lake City Board of Education address shared governance to ensure high quality education experiences for students.

▶ **6 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **1 Legislative Recommendation**

2024-22: A Performance Audit of the Utah System of Higher Education: A Review of System Collaboration, Efficiency, and Workforce Alignment

The Utah System of Higher Education should act more collaboratively and have distinct institutional roles and institutions should develop and use program-level data for system success.

▶ **8 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **3 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-23: A Performance Audit of Student Performance on Statewide Tests: The Importance of Focusing on Underperforming Student Groups

This audit evaluates statewide student assessment data and how this data is being used to inform decision-making.

▶ **4 Agency Recommendations**

2024-24 A Performance Audit of the OpenEd Program: Reviewing Educational Service Provider Funding and Improving Oversight

A performance audit of the OpenEd program focused on examining the funding structures utilized by the program, and improving the monitoring provided by the LEAs who contract with OpenEd.

▶ **10 Agency Recommendations** ▶ **1 Legislative Recommendations**

2024-25: Efficiency Evaluation Follow-Up: State Records Committee Efficiency Evaluation Report

We performed a follow-up of the State Records Committee Efficiency Evaluation Report and found that all three recommendations from the report were fully implemented.

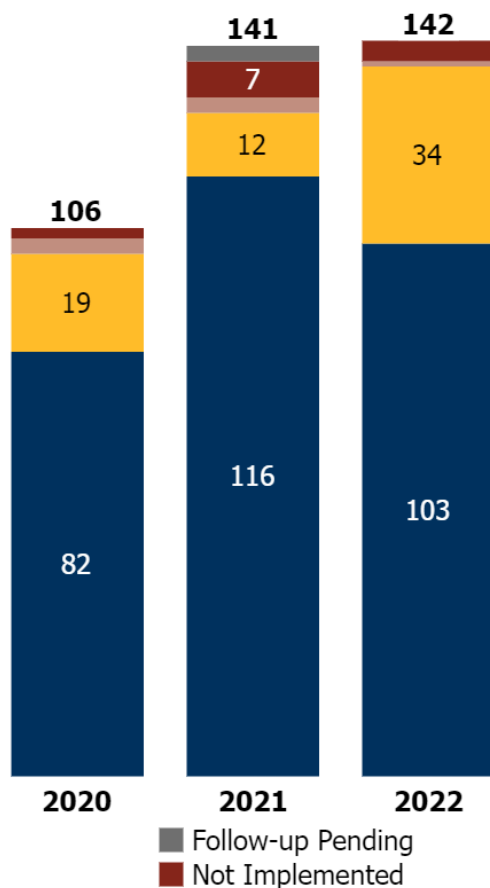
▶ **1 Agency Recommendation**



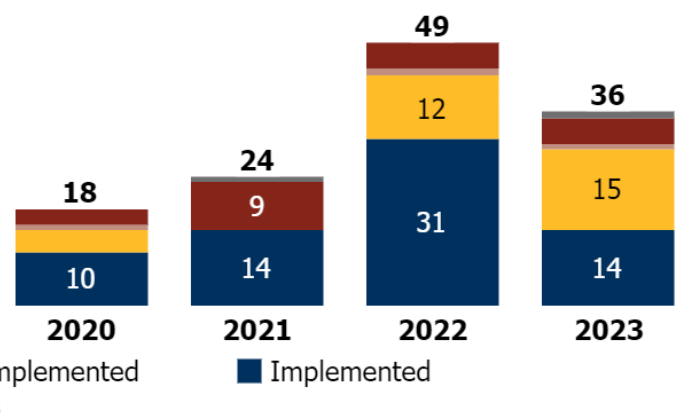
Recommendation Status Dashboard

OLAG follows up on recommendations each year to check the implementation status for each recommendation that has not been fully implemented. Our website now includes a dashboard on recommendation implementation for reports released from 2020 through 2023.

Recommendations Made to Agencies



Recommendations Made to the Legislature



Released Audits and Informal Reports • 2022- 2024

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Education

2022-02	An In-Depth Budget Review of the Weber School District
2022-03	Teacher and Principal Performance Within Utah's Public Education System
2022-04	Financial Reporting in Public Education
2022-05	Public Education Administrative Costs
2022-08	Comprehensive Education Audit Capstone
2022-12	Curriculum and Teacher Training in Public Education
2022-16	An In-Depth Budget Review of the Salt Lake City School District
2023-03	A Performance Audit of Space Utilization by the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind
2023-11	A Systemic Performance Audit of the Park City School District
2024-06	An Initial Review of Merit Awards for Teachers: Best Practices to Inform Program Implementation
2024-07	A Performance Audit of the Teacher and Student Program: A Policy Question of Oversight vs. Local Control
2024-08	A Systemic Performance Audit of Juab School District: A Review of Teacher Experience, Student Achievement, and Statewide Online Education
2024-10	A Systematic Performance Audit of the Rich School District: Addressing Improvements in Student Achievement, Strategic Planning, and Teacher Support Systems
2024-11	A Performance Audit of the Statewide Online Education Program: A Case for Improving Program Oversight, the SEATS Tracking System, and Counselor Involvement
2024-21	An In-Depth Follow-Up Audit of the Salt Lake City School District
2024-23	A Performance Audit of Student Performance on Statewide Tests: The Importance of Focusing on Underperforming Student Groups
2024-24	A Performance Audit of the OpenEd Program Reviewing Educational Service Provider Funding and Improving Oversight

Higher Education

2022-01	Higher Education Police Departments
2022-11	Utah's System of Higher Education Governance
2024-22	A Performance Audit of the Utah System of Higher Education: A Review of System Collaboration, Efficiency, and Workforce Alignment

Local Government

2022-10	Tax Increment Financing
2022-17	Utah's Election System and Controls
2023-02	A Performance Audit of the San Juan County Commission
2024-20	A Performance Audit of Utah's Election System: Strengthening Election Integrity
2024-05	A Performance Audit of Utah's Property Tax System: A Case for Increased Accountability and Transparency

Public Safety

2022-13	Oversight and Effectiveness of Adult Probation and Parole
2022-14	Board of Pardons and Parole
2022-15	A Limited Review of the Coordination Between Public Safety Entities
2023-A	Two-Year Follow-up of 911 Call Answer Times for VECC and Salt Lake City 911
2023-01	An In-Depth Follow-Up of Healthcare in State Prisons
2023-17	A Performance Audit of the Utah State Correctional Facility: An Examination of Staffing, Culture, Safety, and Security
2024-19	Emergency Medical Transportation: A Review of Accountability and Rate-Setting

Social Services

2024-14	A Performance Audit of Utah's Behavioral Health System: A Case for Governance, Strategic Planning, and Accountability
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Transportation

2023-09	A Limited Review of B and C Road Funds
2024-01	Efficiency Evaluation Follow-Up: Transportation Technician Training Efficiency Evaluation
2024-02	A Performance Audit of Ogden-Hinckley Airport: An Examination of Airport Management, Finances, and Strategic Planning Best Practices
2024-04	A Performance Audit of the Utah Transit Authority: An Evaluation of the Efficiency and Effectiveness of UTA's Governance and Planning

Environment

2023-13	A Performance Audit of the Intermountain Power Agency
2023-15	Utah's Water Management: Ensuring Data Integrity, Program Best Practices, and Comprehensive Water Planning
2024-03	A Performance Audit of Mineral Royalty Agreements: An Examination of Mineral Production on the Great Salt Lake
2024-12	A Performance Audit of the Trust System Entities: Improving Oversight Over Beneficiary Spending
2024-13	A Performance Audit of the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration: Improving Controls, Accountability, and Proactive Management

Other

2022-A	Informal Poll of Utah Senate on United States Senate Candidates
2022-06	Efficiency and Effectiveness of Technology Services
2022-07	A Limited Review of the Utah Inland Port Authority
2022-09	An In-Depth Budget Review of the Utah Insurance Department
2023-04	A Performance Audit of Cybersecurity in the State of Utah
2023-05	The Best Practice Handbook- A Practical Guide to Excellence for Utah Government
2023-06	A Performance Audit of Utah's State Energy Policy
2023-07	A Performance Audit of the Collection, Protection, and Use of Personal Information by State Agencies
2023-08	Government Excellence: Follow-Up Low-Cost IT Procurement Efficiency Evaluation
2023-10	High-Risk List: Identifying and Mitigating Critical Vulnerabilities in Utah—2023
2023-12	Government Excellence: Efficiency Evaluation Follow Up Office of the Medical Examiner Efficiency Evaluation
2023-14	A Systemic Review of the Department of Commerce: An Examination of Professional Licensing, Real Estate, and Securities
2023-16	A Performance Audit of Utah Housing Policy: A Case for Statewide Strategic Planning and Accountability
2024-A	Results of 2024 Informal Poll of Utah State Senator on their Choice or United States Senate
2024-09	Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Services Inventory Management Efficiency Evaluation
2024-15	A Review of Specific Nonprofit Pass-Through Grants: Current Contracts Largely in Compliance
2024-16	A Performance Audit of the Signature Verification Process: Improving Controls and Transparency
2024-17	2nd Follow-Up of the Low-Cost IT Procurement Efficiency Evaluation
2024-18	A Performance Audit of Credit Card State Processing Fees: A Review of the Statewide Contract, USHE Institutions, and Local Education Authorities
2024-25	Efficiency Evaluation Follow-Up: State Records Committee Efficiency Evaluation Report

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