



**PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

Subject:

Performance Audits of County Departments

Policy Number

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Purpose

To establish a countywide policy for the use of performance audits to facilitate and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of County departments and programs.

Background

Pursuant to law the Board of Supervisors must each year adopt a balanced budget for the operation of Pima County government that appropriates sufficient funding to "pay as you go". Correspondingly, elected and appointed officials and managers of the County cannot, pursuant to law, expend monies in excess of the amount appropriated by the Board. Notwithstanding this requirement, each fiscal year numerous County offices, departments and programs have historically overspent their budget or under realized budgeted revenues thereby creating substantial fiscal uncertainty and an inability for the Board to adequately meet its responsibility to plan for the budgetary needs of the County.

To constructively address this problem performance audits will be utilized pursuant to this policy to professionally and independently evaluate how funding is being used and managed to achieve program results and to recommend appropriate improvements to facilitate increased efficiency and effectiveness.

Policy

A. Definitions

In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Audit objectives" means the specific issues to be addressed and results to be achieved by an audit.
2. "Audit scope" means the programs, activities and functions to be included in an audit
3. "Economy and Efficiency Audit" means an audit that determines:
 - (a) Whether the department is acquiring, protecting and using its resources economically and efficiently,
 - (b) The causes of identified inefficiencies or uneconomical practices, and
 - (c) Whether the department has complied with applicable laws, regulations and policies relating to economy and efficiency.
4. "Management controls" means the plan of organization, methodology and procedures adopted by management to measure and report performance and ensure that operational and departmental goals are met.
5. "Net Fund Impact" or "NFI" means the calculation that quantifies the difference between revenues and expenditures for a department.

- 6. "Performance Audit" means the objective and systematic examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment of the performance of a County department, program, activity or function in order to provide information to improve accountability to the public and facilitate fiscal and programmatic decision-making including the initiation of appropriate corrective action and includes an economy and efficiency audit and a program audit.
- 7. "Program Audit" means an audit that determines:
 - (a) The extent to which desired results or benefits are being achieved,
 - (b) The effectiveness of programs, activities, or functions, and
 - (c) Whether the department complies with laws, regulations and policies applicable to programs, activities, or functions.

B. Performance Audits to be Undertaken

Each year those departments that exceeded their budgeted NFI for the previous fiscal year by more than \$250,000 shall be subject to a performance audit as described in Section D below. The County Administrator, based upon a review of the previous fiscal year's expenditures and revenues related to each program within such a department, may limit the scope of the performance audit to only those programs, activities or functions that substantially contributed to the NFI exceedance or that have a cash deficit.

C. Selection of Auditors

The County Administrator shall, at least biennially, advertise for interested consultants qualified to perform audits pursuant to this policy on an as needed basis. A Request for Qualifications shall be sent to each consultant who responds to the advertisement and to all certified MWBE firms qualified to perform the types of audits listed in the advertisement. All Qualifications Statements submitted in response to the Request for Qualifications shall be maintained by the County Administrator's Office. As performance audits are required pursuant to this policy, the County Administrator shall negotiate contracts with particular consultants based on subject matter expertise, availability and/or resources appropriate to the size of each audit. The contract shall identify the scope of work and the specific objectives for each audit. The contracts shall be executed by the County Administrator or the Board as required by the County Code.

D. Performance Audit Objectives and Conduct

Each performance audit shall include a program audit and an economy and efficiency audit guided by specific audit objectives developed for each performance audit. The objectives of each performance audit may include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Determination of the cause(s) of NFI exceedance.
- 2. Identification of revenue enhancement opportunities.
- 3. Identification of opportunities for cost recovery.
- 4. Development of recommendations for achieving program and service delivery economies, cost efficiencies and operational improvements.
- 5. Assessment of the performance and compliance of department programs measured against the purpose or goals prescribed by law or regulation or set by management, applicable technical standards or norms, expert opinions, prior years' performance and performance of similar entities.
- 6. Assessment of existing management controls and development of recommendations for their improvement.

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Each department subject to a performance audit, including all of its personnel, shall fully cooperate and assist the auditors and make all records, documents and information not confidential by law available for use by the auditors.

E. Audit Report

Upon completion of the audit an Audit Report shall be transmitted to each member of the Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator and the official or director of the audited department that includes at least the following:

1. Audit scope, objectives and methodology.
2. Significant findings and conclusions developed in response to each audit objective.
3. Recommendations for actions to correct deficiencies and improve operations.
4. All instances of significant noncompliance.
5. The comments of the department official or director concerning the auditor's findings, conclusions and recommendations including plans to correct deficiencies.
6. Noteworthy accomplishments of the department.
7. The nature of any material information omitted from the report and the reason for its nondisclosure.

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