

## EXECUTIVE DIGEST

# PRESENTENCE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

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### INTRODUCTION

This report, issued in December 1997, contains the results of our performance audit\* of the Presentence Investigation\* (PSI) Process, Department of Corrections (DOC).

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### AUDIT PURPOSE

This performance audit was conducted as part of the constitutional responsibility of the Office of the Auditor General. Performance audits are conducted on a priority basis related to the potential for improving effectiveness\* and efficiency\*.

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### BACKGROUND

The mission\* of the Bureau of Field Operations Administration (FOA), as it relates to the PSI process, is to provide investigative support and sentencing recommendations to the courts. Section 771.14 of the *Michigan Compiled Laws* requires probation officers to provide to the court a report on the background, character, and circumstances of an offender charged with a felony\* before the court sentences the offender.

In 1996, FOA prepared 52,767 PSI's for the courts throughout the State.

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### AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

**Audit Objective:** To evaluate the effectiveness of FOA's preparation of PSI reports.

**Conclusion:** We concluded that FOA provided the courts with accurate, reliable, and timely PSI reports. However, our assessment disclosed reportable conditions\* relating to a continuous quality improvement process\* and the effectiveness of the PSI reports (Findings 1 and 2).

**Audit Objective:** To determine if FOA's preparation of PSI reports complied with applicable statutes, rules, policies, and procedures.

**Conclusion:** We concluded that FOA generally complied with the applicable statutes, rules, policies, and procedures governing the PSI process. However, our assessment disclosed a reportable condition related to compliance with the rules and procedures for the preparation of PSI reports (Finding 3).

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**AUDIT SCOPE AND  
METHODOLOGY**

Our audit scope was to examine the presentence investigation process administered by the Department of Corrections. Our audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and, accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

Our methodology included the review of statutes, policies, and procedures for the period January 1994 through June 1997. Our methodology also included a preliminary survey to obtain an understanding of the PSI process; the selection of a sample to determine that PSI's were accurate, reliable, and timely; and a survey of stakeholders\* , the results of which are presented as supplemental information.

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**AGENCY RESPONSES**

Our audit report contains 3 findings and 3 recommendations. The agency preliminary response indicates that FOA agrees with all 3 recommendations. FOA responded that it will take or has taken the necessary action to implement the recommendations.