



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT & BUDGET
LANSING

TRICIA L. FOSTER
DIRECTOR

December 26, 2019

Rick Lowe, Director
Office of Internal Audit Services
State Budget Office
George W. Romney Building
111 South Capitol, 6th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Dear Mr. Lowe:

In accordance with the State of Michigan, Financial Management Guide, Part VII, following are a summary table identifying our responses and corrective action plans to address recommendations contained within the Office of the Auditor General's audit report of the Department of Technology, Management and Budget, Office of Children's Ombudsman audit.

Questions regarding the summary table or corrective action plans should be directed to me.

Sincerely,

Tricia L. Foster, CPM, ACoM
Director DTMB

- c: Representative Shane Hernandez, Chair, House Appropriations
Senator Jim Stamas, Chair, Senate Appropriations
Melissa Schuiling, Office of the Auditor General
JoAnne Huls, Executive Office
Jay Rising, Executive Office
House Fiscal Agency
Senate Fiscal Agency
Brom Stibitz, DTMB
Michelle Lange, DTMB
Mike Williams, SBO
Lisa McCormick, OCO
Caleb Buhs, DTMB
John Juarez, SBO

Department of Technology, Management and Budget
Office of Children's Ombudsman Audit

Summary of Agency Responses to Recommendations

1. Audit recommendations DTMB fully complied with: #1, 2
2. Audit recommendations DTMB agrees with and will comply: 3
3. Audit recommendations DTMB disagrees with: None

Agency Responses to Recommendations

Audit finding #1 - Improvement needed to ensure timely contact with complainants.

OCO agrees with and has complied with the recommendation as of May 2018. OCO established a backup procedure, that in the event there is a staff vacancy, or a staff member is on medical leave, the OCO is able to contact complainants within the required 5 business days. OCO has hired an Executive Assistant who has been trained on taking calls from complainants and will contact complainants in the event an analyst is out of the office within the required 5 business days. This backup procedure will ensure that the OCO will be able to contact complainants within 5 required business days in the event there is a staff vacancy, or a staff member is on medical leave.

Audit finding #2 - Improved data encryption needed over OCO's Web-based complaint form.

OCO agrees with and has complied with the recommendation. Upon notification of the issue, OCO worked with DTMB to immediately upgrade the online complaint form's security to a more secure encryption method.

Audit finding #3 - Continued improvement needed in identifying child deaths that require OCO investigation.

OCO agrees with and will comply with the recommendation; however, OCO is unable to provide a compliance date at this time due to the current status of MDHHS' Michigan

Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (MiSACWIS). The OCO and MDHHS have worked together to create a project, and submitted a "DWIP Work Request", that will allow for the matching of DHHS Vital Records' child death certificates to any child's name in MiSACWIS. If there is a name match, OCO will automatically receive a MiSACWIS data alert and MDHHS will be unable to select which death cases are sent to the OCO. In addition, OCO will review all cases against the data alerts and determine whether OCO should open an investigation based on statutory requirements.

The OCO is currently waiting on MDHHS to determine if this project will proceed as planned considering the State of Michigan's recent decision to no longer support MiSACWIS. As a result, OCO is unable to provide a reasonable date that this project will be completed and when OCO will be able to comply with the recommendation.

OCO takes all child welfare complaints seriously. The office is committed to reviewing and investigating complaints regarding children involved with MDHHS, foster care services, adoption services and the juvenile justice system.

Currently, OCO relies on MDHHS to send child death alerts. This process is mandated in Child Protection Law. When a child dies, MiSACWIS is utilized to send a death alert to the OCO. This process requires a member of MDHHS staff to check a box in MiSACWIS. Due to this human element, some alerts were missed. Once it was determined that some alerts were missed, the OCO worked with MDHHS to review all missed cases.

In order to address any future cases, MDHHS is currently doing a second check based on their records to determine if the box was not checked. If MDHHS identifies a case where the box was not checked, MDHHS emails the OCO of the child death so the OCO can decide whether opening an investigation is warranted. The OCO is committed to looking at the most effective and efficient way to merge the data from MiSACWIS and other databases to conduct an independent review to determine whether a child death case should be opened.