



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Accountability Audit Report

Central Pierce Fire & Rescue

For the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024

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**Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy**

December 22, 2025

Board of Commissioners
Central Pierce Fire & Rescue
Spanaway, Washington

Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for District operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the District's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor
Olympia, WA

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AUDIT RESULTS

Results in brief

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, District operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

However, we noted certain matters related to annual report filing that we communicated to District management and the Board of Commissioners in a letter dated December 12, 2025. We appreciate the District's commitment to resolving those matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of Central Pierce Fire & Rescue from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.260, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all local governments. Our audit involved obtaining evidence about the District's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the year ended December 31, 2024, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Compliance with interlocal agreement terms
- Payroll – gross wages, overtime and electronic funds transfers
- Accounts payable – general disbursements and credit cards
- Open public meetings – compliance with minutes, meetings and executive session requirements
- Financial condition – reviewing for indications of financial distress

RELATED REPORTS

Financial

Our opinion on the District's financial statements and compliance with federal grant program requirements is provided in a separate report, which includes the District's financial statements. That report is available on our website, <https://portal.sao.wa.gov//ReportSearch>.

Federal grant programs

We evaluated internal controls and tested compliance with the federal program requirements, as applicable, for the District's major federal program, which is listed in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs section of the separate financial statement and single audit report. That report is available on our website, <https://portal.sao.wa.gov//ReportSearch>.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT

Central Pierce Fire & Rescue (CPFR) (formerly Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 6) was formed in 1995 following a merger with Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 6, No. 7, and No. 9. In 2008, voters approved the annexation of the City of Puyallup into Pierce County Fire District No. 6. Pierce County Fire District No. 11 merged into the District in September 2009. As of September 1, 2023, CPFR is providing contracted emergency medical services (EMS) and fire suppression to Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 18. As of January 1, 2025, CPFR is also providing contracted EMS and fire suppression to Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 21 (dba Graham Fire & Rescue). The Citizens of Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 18 and Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 21 voted on April 22, 2025 to merge with CPFR effective January 1, 2026.

The District provides services to approximately 328,604 citizens. The District's service area covers 178 square miles, encompassing the unincorporated communities of Parkland, Midland, Spanaway, South Hill, Summit, Summit View, Elk Plain, Frederickson, North Puyallup and Graham, as well as the cities of Puyallup and Orting. The District provides basic services, including 24-hour emergency medical and fire suppression protection, out of 21 fire stations. In addition, the District provides hazardous materials response, technical and water rescue services and training and information to the public.

An elected, five-member Board of Commissioners governs the District. The Board appoints a Fire Chief to oversee the District's daily operations as well as its 334 employees.

Contact information related to this report

Contact:	Tanya Robacker, Finance Director
Telephone:	(253) 538-6416
Website:	www.centralpiercefirer.org

Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for Central Pierce Fire & Rescue at <https://portal.sao.wa.gov//ReportSearch>.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, www.sao.wa.gov. Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

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