

Public Law 98-502  
98th Congress

An Act

To establish uniform audit requirements for State and local governments receiving Federal financial assistance.

Oct. 19, 1984  
[S. 1510]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

Single Audit Act  
of 1984.

SHORT TITLE; PURPOSE

SECTION 1. (a) This Act may be cited as the "Single Audit Act of 1984".

31 USC 7501  
note.

(b) It is the purpose of this Act—

(1) to improve the financial management of State and local governments with respect to Federal financial assistance programs;

(2) to establish uniform requirements for audits of Federal financial assistance provided to State and local governments;

(3) to promote the efficient and effective use of audit resources; and

(4) to ensure that Federal departments and agencies, to the maximum extent practicable, rely upon and use audit work done pursuant to chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code (as added by this Act).

AMENDMENT TO TITLE 31, UNITED STATES CODE

SEC. 2. (a) Subtitle V of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new chapter:

**"CHAPTER 75—REQUIREMENTS FOR SINGLE  
AUDITS**

"Sec.

"7501. Definitions.

"7502. Audit requirements; exemptions.

"7503. Relation to other audit requirements.

"7504. Cognizant agency responsibilities.

"7505. Regulations.

"7506. Monitoring responsibilities of the Comptroller General.

"7507. Effective date; report.

**"§ 7501. Definitions**

31 USC 7501.

"As used in this chapter, the term—

"(1) 'cognizant agency' means a Federal agency which is assigned by the Director with the responsibility for implementing the requirements of this chapter with respect to a particular State or local government.

"(2) 'Comptroller General' means the Comptroller General of the United States.

"(3) 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

"(4) 'Federal financial assistance' means assistance provided by a Federal agency in the form of grants, contracts, loans, loan guarantees, property, cooperative agreements, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations, but does not include direct Federal cash assistance to individuals.

"(5) 'Federal agency' has the same meaning as the term 'agency' in section 551(1) of title 5, United States Code.

"(6) 'generally accepted accounting principles' has the meaning specified in the generally accepted government auditing standards.

"(7) 'generally accepted government auditing standards' means the standards for audit of governmental organizations, programs, activities, and functions, issued by the Comptroller General.

"(8) 'independent auditor' means—

"(A) an external State or local government auditor who meets the independence standards included in generally accepted government auditing standards, or

"(B) a public accountant who meets such independence standards.

"(9) 'internal controls' means the plan of organization and methods and procedures adopted by management to ensure that—

"(A) resource use is consistent with laws, regulations, and policies;

"(B) resources are safeguarded against waste, loss, and misuse; and

"(C) reliable data are obtained, maintained, and fairly disclosed in reports.

"(10) 'Indian tribe' means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaskan Native village or regional or village corporation (as defined in, or established under, the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act) that is recognized by the United States as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

"(11) 'local government' means any unit of local government within a State, including a county, borough, municipality, city, town, township, parish, local public authority, special district, school district, intrastate district, council of governments, and any other instrumentality of local government.

"(12) 'major Federal assistance program' means any program for which total expenditures of Federal financial assistance by the State or local government during the applicable year exceed—

"(A) \$20,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$7,000,000,000;

"(B) \$19,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$6,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$7,000,000,000;

"(C) \$16,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$5,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$6,000,000,000;

"(D) \$13,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$4,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$5,000,000,000;

"(E) \$10,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$3,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$4,000,000,000;

"(F) \$7,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$2,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$3,000,000,000;

"(G) \$4,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$1,000,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$2,000,000,000;

"(H) \$3,000,000 in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$100,000,000 but are less than or equal to \$1,000,000,000; and

"(I) the larger of (i) \$300,000, or (ii) 3 percent of such total expenditures for all programs, in the case of a State or local government for which such total expenditures for all programs exceed \$100,000 but are less than or equal to \$100,000,000.

"(13) 'public accountants' means those individuals who meet the qualification standards included in generally accepted government auditing standards for personnel performing government audits.

"(14) 'State' means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, any instrumentality thereof, any multi-State, regional, or interstate entity which has governmental functions, and any Indian tribe.

"(15) 'subrecipient' means any person or government department, agency, or establishment that receives Federal financial assistance through a State or local government, but does not include an individual that receives such assistance.

#### "§ 7502. Audit requirements; exemptions

31 USC 7502.

"(a)(1)(A) Each State and local government which receives a total amount of Federal financial assistance equal to or in excess of \$100,000 in any fiscal year of such government shall have an audit made for such fiscal year in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the requirements of the regulations prescribed pursuant to section 7505 of this title.

"(B) Each State and local government that receives a total amount of Federal financial assistance which is equal to or in excess of \$25,000 but less than \$100,000 in any fiscal year of such government shall—

"(i) have an audit made for such fiscal year in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the requirements of the regulations prescribed pursuant to section 7505 of this title; or

"(ii) comply with any applicable requirements concerning financial or financial and compliance audits contained in Federal statutes and regulations governing programs under which such Federal financial assistance is provided to that government.

"(C) Each State and local government that receives a total amount of Federal financial assistance which is less than \$25,000 in any

fiscal year of such government shall be exempt for such fiscal year from compliance with—

“(i) the audit requirements of this chapter; and

“(ii) any applicable requirements concerning financial or financial and compliance audits contained in Federal statutes and regulations governing programs under which such Federal financial assistance is provided to that government.

The provisions of clause (ii) of this subparagraph do not exempt a State or local government from compliance with any provision of a Federal statute or regulation that requires such government to maintain records concerning Federal financial assistance provided to such government or that permits a Federal agency or the Comptroller General access to such records.

“(2) For purposes of this section, a State or local government shall be considered to receive Federal financial assistance whether such assistance is received directly from a Federal agency or indirectly through another State or local government.

“(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), audits conducted pursuant to this chapter shall be conducted annually.

“(2) If a State or local government is required—

“(A) by constitution or statute, as in effect on the date of enactment of this chapter, or

“(B) by administrative rules, regulations, guidelines, standards, or policies, as in effect on such date,

to conduct its audits less frequently than annually, the cognizant agency for such government shall, upon request of such government, permit the government to conduct its audits pursuant to this chapter biennially, except as provided in paragraph (3). Such audits shall cover both years within the biennial period.

“(3) Any State or local government that is permitted, under clause (B) of paragraph (2), to conduct its audits pursuant to this chapter biennially by reason of the requirements of a rule, regulation, guideline, standard, or policy, shall, for any of its fiscal years beginning after December 31, 1986, conduct such audits annually unless such State or local government codifies a requirement for biennial audits in its constitution or statutes by January 1, 1987. Audits conducted biennially under the provisions of this paragraph shall cover both years within the biennial period.

“(c) Each audit conducted pursuant to subsection (a) shall be conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, except that, for the purposes of this chapter, such standards shall not be construed to require economy and efficiency audits, program results audits, or program evaluations.

“(d)(1) Each audit conducted pursuant to subsection (a) for any fiscal year shall cover the entire State or local government's operations except that, at the option of such government—

“(A) such audit may, except as provided in paragraph (5), cover only each department, agency, or establishment which received, expended, or otherwise administered Federal financial assistance during such fiscal year; and

“(B) such audit may exclude public hospitals and public colleges and universities.

“(2) Each such audit shall encompass the entirety of the financial operations of such government or of such department, agency, or establishment, whichever is applicable, and shall determine and report whether—

“(A)(i) the financial statements of the government, department, agency, or establishment present fairly its financial position and the results of its financial operations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; and

“(ii) the government, department, agency, or establishment has complied with laws and regulations that may have a material effect upon the financial statements;

“(B) the government, department, agency, or establishment has internal control systems to provide reasonable assurance that it is managing Federal financial assistance programs in compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and

“(C) the government, department, agency, or establishment has complied with laws and regulations that may have a material effect upon each major Federal assistance program.

In complying with the requirements of subparagraph (C), the independent auditor shall select and test a representative number of transactions from each major Federal assistance program.

“(3) Transactions selected from Federal assistance programs, other than major Federal assistance programs, pursuant to the requirements of paragraphs (2)(A) and (2)(B) shall be tested for compliance with Federal laws and regulations that apply to such transactions. Any noncompliance found in such transactions by the independent auditor in making determinations required by this paragraph shall be reported.

“(4) The number of transactions selected and tested under paragraphs (2) and (3), the selection and testing of such transactions, and the determinations required by such paragraphs shall be based on the professional judgment of the independent auditor.

“(5) Each State or local government which, in any fiscal year of such government, receives directly from the Department of the Treasury a total of \$25,000 or more under chapter 67 of this title (relating to general revenue sharing) and which is required to conduct an audit pursuant to this chapter for such fiscal year shall not have the option provided by paragraph (1)(A) for such fiscal year.

31 USC 6701 *et seq.*

“(6) A series of audits of individual departments, agencies, and establishments for the same fiscal year may be considered to be an audit for the purpose of this chapter.

“(e)(1) Each State and local government subject to the audit requirements of this chapter, which receives Federal financial assistance and provides \$25,000 or more of such assistance in any fiscal year to a subrecipient, shall—

“(A) if the subrecipient conducts an audit in accordance with the requirements of this chapter, review such audit and ensure that prompt and appropriate corrective action is taken on instances of material noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations with respect to Federal financial assistance provided to the subrecipient by the State or local government; or

“(B) if the subrecipient does not conduct an audit in accordance with the requirements of this chapter—

“(i) determine whether the expenditures of Federal financial assistance provided to the subrecipient by the State or local government are in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; and

“(ii) ensure that prompt and appropriate corrective action is taken on instances of material noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations with respect to Federal financial



assistance provided to the subrecipient by the State or local government.

“(2) Each such State and local government shall require each subrecipient of Federal assistance through such government to permit, as a condition of receiving funds from such assistance, the independent auditor of the State or local government to have such access to the subrecipient's records and financial statements as may be necessary for the State or local government to comply with this chapter.

Report.

“(f) The report made on any audit conducted pursuant to this section shall, within thirty days after completion of such report, be transmitted to the appropriate Federal officials and made available by the State or local government for public inspection.

(g) If an audit conducted pursuant to this section finds any material noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations by, or material weakness in the internal controls of, the State or local government with respect to the matters described in subsection (d)(2), the State or local government shall submit to appropriate Federal officials a plan for corrective action to eliminate such material noncompliance or weakness or a statement describing the reasons that corrective action is not necessary. Such plan shall be consistent with the audit resolution standard promulgated by the Comptroller General (as part of the standards for internal controls in the Federal Government) pursuant to section 3512(b) of this title.

31 USC 3512.

31 USC 7503.

#### “§ 7503. Relation to other audit requirements

“(a) An audit conducted in accordance with this chapter shall be in lieu of any financial or financial and compliance audit of an individual Federal assistance program which a State or local government is required to conduct under any other Federal law or regulation. To the extent that such audit provides a Federal agency with the information it requires to carry out its responsibilities under Federal law or regulation, a Federal agency shall rely upon and use that information and plan and conduct its own audits accordingly in order to avoid a duplication of effort.

“(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), a Federal agency shall conduct any additional audits which are necessary to carry out its responsibilities under Federal law or regulation. The provisions of this chapter do not authorize any State or local government (or subrecipient thereof) to constrain, in any manner, such agency from carrying out such additional audits.

“(c) The provisions of this chapter do not limit the authority of Federal agencies to conduct, or enter into contracts for the conduct of, audits and evaluations of Federal financial assistance programs, nor limit the authority of any Federal agency Inspector General or other Federal audit official.

“(d) Subsection (a) shall apply to a State or local government which conducts an audit in accordance with this chapter even though it is not required by section 7502(a) to conduct such audit.

“(e) A Federal agency that performs or contracts for audits in addition to the audits conducted by recipients pursuant to this chapter shall, consistent with other applicable law, arrange for funding the cost of such additional audits. Such additional audits include economy and efficiency audits, program results audits, and program evaluations.

**“§ 7504. Cognizant agency responsibilities**

31 USC 7504.

“(a) The Director shall designate cognizant agencies for audits conducted pursuant to this chapter.

“(b) A cognizant agency shall—

“(1) ensure that audits are made in a timely manner and in accordance with the requirements of this chapter;

“(2) ensure that the audit reports and corrective action plans made pursuant to section 7502 of this title are transmitted to the appropriate Federal officials; and

“(3)(A) coordinate, to the extent practicable, audits done by or under contract with Federal agencies that are in addition to the audits conducted pursuant to this chapter; and (B) ensure that such additional audits build upon the audits conducted pursuant to this chapter.

**“§ 7505. Regulations**

31 USC 7505.

“(a) The Director, after consultation with the Comptroller General and appropriate Federal, State, and local government officials, shall prescribe policies, procedures, and guidelines to implement this chapter. Each Federal agency shall promulgate such amendments to its regulations as may be necessary to conform such regulations to the requirements of this chapter and of such policies, procedures, and guidelines.

“(b)(1) The policies, procedures, and guidelines prescribed pursuant to subsection (a) shall include criteria for determining the appropriate charges to programs of Federal financial assistance for the cost of audits. Such criteria shall prohibit a State or local government which is required to conduct an audit pursuant to this chapter from charging to any such program (A) the cost of any financial or financial and compliance audit which is not conducted in accordance with this chapter, and (B) more than a reasonably proportionate share of the cost of any such audit that is conducted in accordance with this chapter.

“(2) The criteria prescribed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not, in the absence of documentation demonstrating a higher actual cost, permit (A) the ratio of (i) the total charges by a government to Federal financial assistance programs for the cost of audits performed pursuant to this chapter, to (ii) the total cost of such audits, to exceed (B) the ratio of (i) total Federal financial assistance expended by such government during the applicable fiscal year or years, to (ii) such government's total expenditures during such fiscal year or years.

“(c) Such policies, procedures, and guidelines shall include such provisions as may be necessary to ensure that small business concerns and business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals will have the opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts awarded to fulfill the audit requirements of this chapter.

**“§ 7506. Monitoring responsibilities of the Comptroller General**

31 USC 7506.

“The Comptroller General shall review provisions requiring financial or financial and compliance audits of recipients of Federal assistance that are contained in bills and resolutions reported by the committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. If the Comptroller General determines that a bill or resolution contains provisions that are inconsistent with the requirements of this chap-

ter, the Comptroller General shall, at the earliest practicable date, notify in writing—

“(1) the committee that reported such bill or resolution; and

“(2)(A) the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate (in the case of a bill or resolution reported by a committee of the Senate); or

“(B) the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives (in the case of a bill or resolution reported by a committee of the House of Representatives).”

31 USC 7507.

**“§ 7507. Effective date; report**

“(a) This chapter shall apply to any State or local government with respect to any of its fiscal years which begin after December 31, 1984.

“(b) The Director, on or before May 1, 1987, and annually thereafter, shall submit to each House of Congress a report on operations under this chapter. Each such report shall specifically identify each Federal agency or State or local government which is failing to comply with this chapter.”

(b) The provisions of this Act shall not diminish or otherwise affect the authority of the Tennessee Valley Authority to conduct its own audits of any matter involving funds disbursed by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

(c) The table of chapters for subtitle V of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 73 the following new item:

**“75. Requirements for Single Audits..... 7501”.**

Approved October 19, 1984.

Tennessee  
Valley  
Authority.  
31 USC 7501  
note.

**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1510 (H.R. 4821):**

HOUSE REPORT No. 98-708 accompanying H.R. 4821 (Comm. on Government Operations).

SENATE REPORT No. 98-234 (Comm. on Governmental Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 129 (1983): Nov. 2, considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 130 (1984): May 15, H.R. 4821 considered and passed House; S. 1510, amended, passed in lieu.

Oct. 3, Senate concurred in House amendments with amendments.

Oct. 4, House concurred in Senate amendments.