

Supreme Court of Florida

500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1925

CARLOS G. MUÑIZ
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WOODROW KERCE II
MARSHAL

February 26, 2025

The Honorable Carlos G. Muñiz
Chief Justice
Florida Supreme Court
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Auditor General Report No. 2025-013, Supreme Court (Court) and Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA), Selected Administrative Activities, Six-Month Follow-up Response

Dear Chief Justice Muñiz:

In accordance with section 20.055(6)(h), Florida Statutes, the Office of Inspector General is required to provide a status on the implementation of recommendations made in response to Auditor General Report 2025-013, issued on September 6, 2024. Updates were provided by responsible managers for the following findings:

- **Finding 1** – Court Building Access Controls – recommendations have been implemented and corrective actions taken.
- **Finding 2** – Return of State-Owned Property – corrective actions are in process of being finalized.
- **Finding 3** – Conflicts of Interest – recommendations have been implemented and corrective actions taken.

The issues noted in the original report and details of the current status are provided as follows.

Finding 1: Court Building Access Controls: The Court did not periodically review Court building access privileges nor always timely remove building access privileges upon an employee's separation from Court employment.

Auditor General Recommendation: *We recommend that the Court enhance security policies and procedures to provide for periodic reviews of the appropriateness of employee access to the Court building and ensure that access to the building is immediately terminated upon separation from Court employment.*

Court Response:

We do not dispute the finding. Onboarding and offboarding of employees were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred during this audit period. Upon the Marshal's Office receipt of a separation notification, the separation date is programmed into the system to automatically disable the employee's building access. The Marshal has requested the addition of a signature line on the Employee Separation Checklist that incorporates the verbiage "building access removed" with signature and date/time fields. This will allow for a tracking mechanism to ensure building access was disabled and record who was responsible for disabling access. Going forward, the Office of Human Resources will provide a monthly report of separated employees to the Marshal, which will then be compared to the list of building access removals for the same time period. This will aid in ensuring no separated employees have retained building access.

Six-Month Follow-up Response: The Marshal's Office has completed monthly reviews of building access removals. The Office of Human Resources has provided monthly reports of employee separations to the Marshal. The report of employee separations is compared to the building access removals for the same time period, to ensure timely removal of access for separated employees. While building access for one employee was not timely removed, the employee was working remotely from the Miami area. The Marshal's Office has established a written procedure for removal and suspension of building access.

Status: Closed

Finding 2: Return of State-Owned Property: The Court did not always document the return of State-owned property from employees separating from Court employment.

Auditor General Recommendation: *We recommend that the Court establish uniform policies and procedures for, and court records evidence, the return of all State-owned property from employees upon employment separation.*

Court Response:

We agree with the recommendation. Court managers have utilized the Employee Separation Checklist as established by the OSCA. While there was inconsistent documentation of parts of the checklist, all State-owned property was returned to the Court. Going forward, a documented procedure will be established to ensure Court managers are consistent in the usage of the Employee Separation Checklist. As noted in our response to Finding 1, management has requested an update to the Employee Separation Checklist to further support Court managers in clearly documenting that all State-owned property is returned by staff at the time of separation.

Six-Month Follow-up Response: Corrective action is in process of finalization. The Employee Separation Checklist is being updated to include language specifically referencing the disabling of building access. Documentation was provided by applicable managers for separated employees to attest that all state-owned property was returned. Applicable staff have been notified to utilize the updated Employee Separation Checklist going forward.

Status: Open – expected completion by March 31, 2025.

Finding 3: Conflicts of Interest: Court records did not evidence that all individuals involved in applicable contract awards, attested, in writing, that they were independent of, and had no conflict of interest related to, the entities evaluated and selected.

Auditor General Recommendation: *We recommend that the Court ensure that court records evidence that all individuals involved in the procurement and awarding of applicable contracts complete conflict of interest statements*

attesting that they were independent of, and had no conflict of interest in, the entities evaluated and selected.

Court Response:

We agree with Finding #3 and the associated recommendation. The form utilized to approve a sole-source or exceptional purchase or contract was amended on August 23, 2024, to include a statement attesting to no conflict of interest. This will ensure the statement is completed prior to the goods or services being procured.

Six-Month Follow-up Response: Corrective action has been taken in this area. Management has updated the form to approve a sole-source or exceptional purchase to include a written acknowledgement attesting to no conflicts of interest. A review of subsequent applicable contracts and procurements since the audit indicated only one procurement (in November 2024) met the requirements for and utilized the new form. The form was signed and dated by all applicable parties attesting to no conflicts of interest.

Status: Closed

If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, please contact me at 850-488-9123.

Sincerely,

Millicent Burns

Millicent Burns
Inspector General

CC: Joint Legislative Auditing Committee
Eric Maclure, State Courts Administrator
Paul Flemming, Public Information Officer
Jessica Outlaw, Judicial Assistant to the Chief Justice