



State Auditor  
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## OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

# *E-Update*

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September 16, 2016

1. Deadline: Special District Reporting Form
2. Relief Associations: Establishing Multi-Year Benefit Level Proposals
3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Report Evidence of Wrongdoing

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### **1. Deadline: Special District Reporting Form**

The Special District Financial Reporting Form and Financial Statements are due September 30 for districts whose fiscal year ended March 31, 2016. The reporting form can be found at:

<https://www.auditor.state.mn.us/safes/>.

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### **2. Relief Associations: Establishing Multi-Year Benefit Level Proposals**

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) has received questions from relief association trustees who are interested in seeking municipal ratification of a proposal to increase the relief association's benefit level incrementally over a multi-year period. Such a proposal is only consistent with established law if the municipality ratifies each incremental benefit level before it becomes effective.

For example, if a relief association would like to incrementally increase its benefit level over a five-year period from \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year of service, the \$2,000 benefit level would need to be ratified in year one, the \$2,200 benefit level would need to be separately ratified in year two, etc.

This practice provides a relief association's board of trustees and the city council or town board with flexibility to react as investment markets and funding situations change over time. This practice also ensures that each incremental benefit level does not exceed the relief association's maximum allowable benefit level, which is determined annually and can fluctuate from year to year.

### 3. Avoiding Pitfalls: Report Evidence of Wrongdoing

Local government officials and employees must notify the OSA whenever evidence of theft, embezzlement, or the unlawful use of public funds or property is discovered. The reporting requirement also applies to officers and employees of local public pension plans, including volunteer firefighter relief associations and teachers' retirement fund associations governed by chapter 354A.

Under [Minn. Stat. § 609.456](#), a detailed description of the alleged incident(s) must be made to the OSA "promptly" and in writing. The description may include information that is classified as not public data. "Prompt" reporting means that the OSA should be contacted when the evidence is first discovered. Information that could reasonably be used to determine the identity of an individual providing the required notice is classified as private. To make a report, please use the following form:

[http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/reportconcern\\_govtofficial\\_form.pdf](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/reportconcern_govtofficial_form.pdf).

If you have questions about whether a report should be made, please contact Mark Kerr at 651-296-4717 or [mark.kerr@osa.state.mn.us](mailto:mark.kerr@osa.state.mn.us).

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