

**PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**OF**

**SENIOR HOME SERVICES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR AFFAIRS**

**REPORT NO. 13-102**



**City of Albuquerque**  
**Office of Internal Audit**

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SENIOR HOME SERVICES  
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Senior Home Services – Department of Senior Affairs  
Report No. 13-102  
**Executive Summary**

The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) conducted a performance audit of the Senior Home Services Division (Home Services) operated by the Department of Senior Affairs (DSA). The audit was included in the FY13 approved audit plan.

Home Services is committed to helping individuals who reside in Bernalillo County safely age in place. They strive to meet the needs of seniors by providing home repair, retrofit, and chores programs. In addition, they strive to enhance the safety of disabled individuals through retrofit services.

Home repair provides for minor home repair for Bernalillo County homeowners who are 60 years or older and occupy the property. Home retrofit provides safety equipment to residents of the City of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County. Home chores provides minor home chores for Bernalillo County homeowners who are 60 or older and occupy the property.

**Objective: Does DSA follow criteria to objectively determine the eligibility of its clientele?**

- Based on a statistical sample of 24 completed projects, all clients were eligible to receive the services rendered.

**Objective: Does DSA have policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff are qualified, efficient and effective?**

- Home Services does not maintain a record of volunteers.
- Home Services staff are qualified to perform their assigned responsibilities and average 4.11 years of service with the division.
- Home Services projects average 24 days from receipt of referral to end of completion.
- Based on a statistical sample of dates during the audit period, it was determined that Home Services employees complete an average of 3.9 projects per day.

**Objective: Does DSA have effective internal controls to ensure the efficient operation of Senior Home Services?**

- Home Services does not maintain an inventory listing of supplies used for home chores, home repair, or retrofit projects.
- Home Services should strengthen its internal control to ensure that the program's efficiency is maximized. All internal forms should be fully completed by employees. Project sheets should be approved by a manager prior to closing out the referral.
- Home Services does not have adequate internal controls in place surrounding donation request letters as the letters are hand-delivered by the employees.
- Home Services does not reconcile its expense tracking spreadsheet to the City's general ledger.

**Objective: Does DSA follow applicable laws, rules, policies and procedures?**

- Home Services does not complete a satisfaction survey as specified in the MOU for the Community Development Block Grant.
- Home Services is located adjacent to an abandoned City building. The condition involves broken glass, rotten wood, and nesting birds. As a result, the building may violate the City Ordinance and pose a safety or health risk to the Home Services employees.

**Recommendations and management responses are included within the audit report.**



*City of Albuquerque*  
Office of Internal Audit  
P.O. BOX 1293 ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87103

May 1, 2013

Accountability in Government Oversight Committee  
City of Albuquerque  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Audit: Performance Audit  
Senior Home Services  
13-102

**FINAL**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) conducted a performance audit of the Senior Home Services Division (Home Services) operated by the Department of Senior Affairs (DSA). The audit was included in the fiscal year (FY) 13 approved audit plan.

The mission of DSA is to be the community leader, who, in partnership with others, involves seniors and people of all ages in creating a community that enhances everyone's quality of life by providing opportunities to achieve their potential, share their wisdom, maintain their independence, and live in dignity.

Home Services is committed to helping individuals who reside in Bernalillo County safely age in place. They strive to meet the needs of seniors by providing home repair, retrofit, and chores programs. In addition, they strive to enhance the safety of individuals who are disabled through retrofit services. The Home Services team welcomes the assistance provided by volunteers to achieve its goals.

Home Services provides minor home repair and chores for Bernalillo County homeowners who are 60 years or older and occupy the property. The Home Services retrofit program provides safety equipment to residents of the City of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County. There is no age limitation for retrofit services.

Home Services provides an abundance of support services and, therefore, relies heavily on volunteerism and grant funding. Home Services is a sub-recipient of grant resources provided by the

New Mexico Aging and Long Term Service Department (Area Plan Grant) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which are appropriated to the Department of Family and Community Services and passed through to DSA. The budget totals for FY 12 & FY 13 are:

<b>Home Services Budget</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>
General Fund	\$92,000	\$93,000
Area Agency on Aging (AAA)	\$732,542	\$732,542
CDBG	\$150,000	\$150,000
Silver Horizons, NM	<u>\$24,000</u>	<u>\$24,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$998,542</b>	<b>\$999,542</b>

**AUDIT OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the audit were to determine:

- Does DSA follow criteria to objectively determine the eligibility of its clientele?
- Does DSA have policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff are qualified, efficient and effective?
  - Does DSA have effective internal controls to ensure the efficient operation of Senior Home Services?
  - Does DSA follow applicable laws, rules, policies and procedures?



**SCOPE**

Our audit did not include an examination of all functions and activities related to Senior Home Services. Our scope addressed the objectives above for FY12 through November of FY13.

This report and its conclusions are based on information taken from a sample of transactions and do not intend to represent an examination of all related transactions and activities. The audit report is based on our examination of activities through the completion of fieldwork, January 23, 2013, and does not reflect events or accounting entries after that date.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our

audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

## **METHODOLOGY**

We utilized several methodologies to achieve the audit objectives. These evidence gathering techniques included, but were not limited to:

- Interviewing key DSA personnel,
- Obtaining pertinent electronic data,
- Analyzing supporting documentation,
- Identifying and testing internal controls,
- Reviewing Home Services Policies and Procedures,
- Reviewing City of Albuquerque, Information Technology Department Policies and Standards,
- Reviewing IT Governance Institute's Control Objectives for Information and related Technology (CobiT) audit guidelines, and
- Reviewing Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Best Practices.

## **FINDINGS**

The following findings concern areas that we believe could be improved by the implementation of the related recommendations.

1. **DSA SHOULD CONDUCT AN INVENTORY COUNT AND MAINTAIN A LIST OF SUPPLIES ON-HAND.**

Home Services does not conduct a periodic inventory count or maintain a list of supplies on-hand that are used in providing home repair, home chores, or retrofit services.

Home Services management personnel were not accurately following the division's policies and procedures, and stated that they had not considered tracking and maintaining an inventory list to be necessary because of the rate at which the supplies are used.

A perpetual inventory system would allow Home Services to accurately track the number and types of supplies used for home chores, home repair, or retrofit and to recognize if items had been lost or stolen. It would also allow costing for the various repairs.

According to Home Services Policies & Procedures, Section 7 - Inventory Control, “the Assistant Maintenance Supervisor will complete the supply and equipment inventory on a daily basis.” GFOA Best Practices state that it is important to conduct periodic verifications of assets and perform a physical inventory count.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Comply with the Home Services Policies & Procedures and take inventory as required.
- Maintain a perpetual inventory system and periodically reconcile the inventory records to the purchases and installations to ensure proper usage.

RESPONSE FROM DSA

*“DSA agrees with Finding #1 and has developed two weekly inventory tracking forms (retrofit raw materials and safety equipment) so that the Home Services team is in compliance with Section 7 of the Home Services Policies & Procedures Manual. This finding alerted the Home Services team to change the policies and procedures from completing the supply and equipment inventory on a daily basis to a weekly basis. The inventory list of supplies that are on-hand will allow the Home Services team to:*

- *“know exactly how many supplies are on-hand*
- *“have enough materials to complete work orders in the most efficient manner*
- *“decrease the need to rush orders for materials*
- *“avoid overstocking of items*

*“Two pilot weekly inventory tracking forms have been developed and are currently in use. However, there is more information that the Home Services team needs to capture in order to make the best use of these tracking tools. Each of the weekly inventory tracking forms will account for the equipment and materials being ordered and the equipment and materials that are being used in the homes of our clients.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

2. DSA SHOULD ENSURE THAT POLICIES AND PROCESSES ARE PROPERLY FOLLOWED.

From a population of 5,890 referrals completed throughout the audit period, a statistical sample of 24 completed services was selected. The documentation for one service in the sample had been finalized and closed in the system although it had not been reviewed and signed off by the supervisor. Additionally, zero hours were recorded for the service although the supporting documentation indicated that 4 hours had been spent on the project.

Due to the lack of a formal back-up plan to address coinciding management and staff absences, the documentation was not properly reviewed by a supervisor or reconciled by the manager, allowing errors to occur and remain undetected.

Home Services has procedures to help ensure the accuracy of reported data. By consistently following the procedures, DSA will help maintain the integrity of the reported data and avoid inaccuracies.

According to the GFOA, management should design, implement, and maintain effective control activities. These control activities should include periodic reconciliations and verifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Establish a back-up plan to address unexpected events or absences.
- Take steps to ensure that the managerial review and approval for completed projects is properly executed.
- Redesign the project forms so that all time spent on a project is properly documented and easily identified. At a minimum, the forms should include additional detail including the start time and completion time of the workers.
- Generate reports and analyze the available data to present a complete picture of referrals received, type of service requested (chore, repair, retrofit), employee’s workload, and hours spent.
- Consider implementing an electronic work order system such as Yardi.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:



*“DSA agrees with Finding #2. As a result of this finding, the DSA recognizes that the Policies and Procedures Manual needs to be updated to ensure that this type of behavior is not repeated in the future. The policy will clearly explain that a work order cannot be entered into the Harmony for Aging (HFA) database if the work order has not been signed off by the Senior Affairs Construction Supervisor. In the case that the Senior Affairs Construction Supervisor is out of the office, the Assistant Maintenance Supervisor will be able to sign off of the work order. The addition of this language in the policies and procedures manual will ensure the appropriate supervisory review of work orders prior to being finalized and closed in HFA. Further, additional language will be placed into the policies and procedures regarding the number of hours that are recorded for each work order. If no hours can be charged to a work order, justification on the work order needs to be documented so that it is apparent why employees of the Home Services team were sent to a home to complete a work order, but were unable to charge hours to that assignment.*

*“A copy of the manifest is attached to each work order and states the start and completion times of the workers. Currently, the Home Services team provides the number of service hours provided in both the Home Chore and Home Repair/Retrofit programs every month as well as the number of unduplicated clients that are served in the home chore, home repair, and home retrofit areas of the programs per the Area Plan developed by the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).*

*“The Home Services team will also assign an approximate amount of time to each service that is provided. These time approximations will be added to the policies and procedures manual. This information will allow the office assistants a general idea of how long each work order will take and will add efficiencies to our scheduling process.*

*“The DSA has begun initial research regarding the Senior Housing Property Management Software, Yardi Voyager™. The DSA will determine if the cost and addition of another software program will add value to the Home Services team.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

3. DSA SHOULD MAINTAIN A RECORD OF ITS VOLUNTEERS.

Though Home Services is able to estimate a numeric tally of volunteers, a formal record of individuals who have volunteered and the corresponding number of volunteer hours received is not maintained. As the division relies heavily on its volunteer workforce to keep up with the high volume of referrals, records of volunteers can be invaluable in scheduling, reviewing efficiency, and reporting to funding agencies.

Home Services management stated that they had never considered formal tracking of volunteers to be necessary as most volunteers are short-term; therefore, the turnover rate is high. By formally tracking volunteers, Home Services would be able to accurately report the workforce needed to perform all duties and the number of volunteers assigned.

Administrative Instruction (AI) 7-40 states:

This instruction applies to current and future Volunteers. All Volunteers must submit an executed written application to the Department(s) they will be working under. Current Volunteers and new Volunteers must complete this application.

Furthermore, the Area Plan in place between the City of Albuquerque and the NM Aging and Long-Term Services Department states that home repair/home retrofit will “recruit and utilize 100 volunteers to provide home repair and retrofit services.”

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Formally track all volunteers working with Home Services, and
- Ensure all volunteers complete an application as required by AI 7-40.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*“DSA agrees with Finding #3. The Home Services Team will create an MS Excel tracking tool that formally tracks each volunteer, the number of hours that they volunteer, the organization that they belong to, basic*

*contact information, and two areas that show they have completed an application as required by AI 7-40 and were given an overview of the services offered by the DSA. This information will be added to the policies and procedures manual.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

4. DSA SHOULD MAIL DONATION LETTERS TO THE CLIENT UPON COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT.

Upon completion of a Home Services project, the employee provides the client with a donation request letter, along with a pre-addressed postage paid envelope. The letter details the service that was provided and includes a dollar amount which approximates the cost of the service if performed by a contractor (labor rate plus retail value of materials as of June 2010).

Home Services employees are instructed not to accept donations. However, there is not a control in place to prevent employees from accepting donations handed to them. Mailed donations are received by the DSA fiscal division. From July 2011 through November 2012, there were 743 donation request letters returned to DSA resulting in donations totaling \$41,628; an average of \$56 per donation. Over that same time period, Home Services completed 5,890 referrals with a donation potential of over \$325,000.

Home Services management had not considered the underlying risk associated with hand-delivering donation letters when establishing the policy. Mailing the letters following completion of the project will provide preventive controls over donations. These controls are designed to keep errors or irregularities from occurring in the first place and are generally the most effective, efficient and economical.

The Older Americans Act: Title III Regulations, Section 1321.67 Service Contributions states:

- (1) Provide each older person with an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the cost of the service...
- (3) Establish appropriate procedures to safeguard and account for all contributions.

Mailing the donation letters will decrease the risk of donations being lost or stolen.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Mail donation letters to clients upon completion of the service project.
- Review and update the contents of the letter to ensure that the information is accurate and up-to-date.

RESPONSE FROM DSA

*“The DSA understands the importance of Finding #4, however, the cost of mailing donation letters would be approximately \$3,000 each year. This cost would mean that monies for direct services would be reduced. This finding highlighted the importance of ensuring that employees of the Home Services team never accept a donation for services from a senior client. The DSA would like to update the policies and procedures to improve communications between the Home Services team and the clients served regarding donations. The office assistant is assigned the task of scheduling a work order to be completed. During this call, the office assistant will explain to the senior that after the work is completed in their home, the Home Services employee will give the senior a survey and a donation envelope that they can mail back to the Department of Senior Affairs. The office assistant will also be required to inform the senior that they are not allowed to give money or gratuity to any employee or volunteer.”*

*“The Home Services team is expected to receive approximately \$22,000 from donations each year to report as Program Income. The Performance Audit Report states in part that, “From July 2011 through November 2012, there were 743 donation request letters returned to DSA resulting in donations totaling \$41,628.” Since the DSA is receiving more Program Income than is required, we believe that this increased communication regarding donations is an acceptable control at this time.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

5. DSA SHOULD ENSURE THAT ALL EMPLOYEES FULLY COMPLETE ALL FORMS.

Home Services employees do not fully complete the vehicle log as required prior to departing from, and returning to, the Home Services office. Due to the daily workload, Home Services management had not been monitoring the completion of the vehicle log and was unaware that the employees had not been completing the log fully upon their return to the office.

When employees complete the vehicle log prior to leaving and upon returning to the office, the division has accurate records of vehicle usage, and a time record of the employees' work in the field.

The Home Services Policies & Procedures, Section 4, E, requires that at the end of the work shift employees are to sign their vehicles back in at the Office Administrator's Desk.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Enforce the policy so that employees accurately complete the vehicle log upon their departure from, and subsequent return to, the office.
- Consider revising the vehicle log to include the beginning and ending vehicle odometer readings.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*“DSA agrees with Finding #5. The Home Services team will update the policies & procedures manual regarding the process of signing city vehicles in and out. The updated policy will include an example of a newly created vehicle log. The existing vehicle log will be updated to include the beginning and ending vehicle odometer readings. The vehicle log will be monitored daily to ensure compliance.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

6. DSA SHOULD STORE PREVIOUS YEARS' CLIENT FILES AND RECORDS IN A SECURE LOCATION.

Home Services currently stores historic documents in a separate building to which another City department has unsupervised access.

At its inception, Home Services was a small program that did not produce or retain many records. As the program grew over the years, the number of records produced and retained increased significantly. Currently, the Home Services office building does not provide the space necessary in which to store the voluminous records. Home Services staff discovered that several boxes of records were older than the required retention period and could be destroyed. Some boxes contained records dating back to 2005.

Properly secured records decrease the risk and liability to the City of Albuquerque, as the Home Services records contain detailed personal information about the clients.

GFOA Best Practices state, "Access to assets and records should be on a strictly "as needed" basis." Additionally, Municipality Retention and Disposition Schedules under New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 1.15.5.208 states "Revenue Contracts and Grants:...retain records for six years after termination of grant/contract or retain records for five years after submission of final expenditure report, whichever is longer."

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Move all documents from the current storage location to a secured location where only Home Services employees have access,
- Review dates of documents to determine the appropriate retention or disposition, and
- Prepare documents to be archived or destroyed according to the records retention and disposition schedule.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*"DSA agrees with Finding #6 and immediately remedied this finding during the audit visit. All of the documents were moved from the building south of the Home Services Administrative Office to a secure location on site. The DSA will also review the dates of the documents to determine the appropriate retention and disposition of those documents. The Home Services team will work with the City of Albuquerque Records Center to*

*prepare documents to be archived or destroyed per the records retention and disposition schedule.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

7. DSA SHOULD FOLLOW-UP AND CONDUCT A SATISFACTION SURVEY.

Home Services does not conduct a satisfaction survey regarding retrofit services. Rather, Home Services relies on the client to report any issues or concerns regarding the services provided. Home Services management stated that they had not noticed the survey requirement within the Memorandum of Understanding.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding between DSA and the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (an office of the Community Development Division), “Scope of Work,” Home Services is to “Develop a customer satisfaction survey, i.e. postcard to be mailed to DSA following services rating timeliness, quality of workmanship and courtesy of workers. Customer satisfaction documentation must be maintained, tallied and reported quarterly.”

Follow-ups and satisfaction surveys are an important tool, for all services provided, and will allow Home Services to monitor and improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, by ensuring that all criteria specified by CDBG are properly completed, the possibility that the City may lose the grant funding is minimized.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Create a client satisfaction survey regarding retrofit services, and
- Follow-up with the clients to ensure the services performed were satisfactory.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*“DSA agrees with Finding #7 and immediately created a client satisfaction survey for not only the retrofit services, but repair and chore services as well. The newly created surveys are attached to this report as well as a*

*sample of some of the responses that we have received to date. The policies & procedures manual will be updated to include the client satisfaction survey. In addition, an MS Excel document will be developed to track the results of the survey.*

*“The Home Services team began giving the surveys to clients on March 1, 2013. To date, a total of 295 surveys have been given to clients upon completion of a work order.*

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u># OF SURVEYS GIVEN</u>
• “Retrofit	185
• “Chores	60
• “Repair	50

*“To date, 11% (32 out of 295) of the surveys have been completed and returned to the Home Services office.*

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u># OF SURVEYS RETURNED</u>
• “Retrofit	10 (5%)
• “Chores	14 (23%)
• “Repair	8 (16%)

**“SURVEY RESULTS**

*“Retrofit Program: All surveys returned received the “EXCELLENT” rating.*

*“Chores Program: All surveys returned received the “EXCELLENT” rating, except one that received a “SATISFACTORY” rating for the “Response Time (Appointment)” area.*

*“Repair Program: All surveys returned received the “EXCELLENT” rating, except two that received “SATISFACTORY” ratings for the “Quality of Work” area and two that received “SATISFACTORY” ratings for the “Overall Satisfaction” area.*

*“No surveys that have been returned received the “POOR” rating.”*

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE**



*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

8. DSA SHOULD UPDATE POLICIES & PROCEDURES TO REQUIRE MONTHLY RECONCILIATION OF THE MS EXCEL SPREADSHEET TO THE CITY’S GENERAL LEDGER.

Home Services tracks expenditures for each program (Home Repair, Home Retrofit, & Home Chores) via MS Excel spreadsheets, but does not consistently reconcile the spreadsheets to the City’s general ledger.

The Home Services policies and procedures specify that expenses for each program will be tracked using an MS Excel spreadsheet, though the procedures do not require monthly reconciliations with the City’s general ledger. According to DSA management, the use of an MS Excel spreadsheet is to enable the program manager to track spending and know the available balance of each project without waiting for invoices to post.

By reconciling the MS Excel spreadsheets with the City’s general ledger regularly (i.e. monthly), errors could be prevented and Home Services could avoid reporting inaccurate spending.

GFOA Best Practices state that management should design, implement, and maintain effective control activities. These control activities should include periodic reconciliations and verifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Update its policies and procedures to require monthly reconciliation of the MS Excel spreadsheet to the City’s general ledger, and
- Work with the fiscal manager and reconcile the Home Services spreadsheet to the ERP system monthly.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*“DSA agrees with Finding #8. The Home Services team will update the policies & procedures manual to require the monthly reconciliation of the MS Excel spreadsheet to the City’s general ledger. This monthly*

*reconciliation will take place during a meeting with the Senior Affairs Construction Supervisor and the Fiscal Manager. The Senior Affairs Program Manager and the Social Services Division Manager will be strongly encouraged to attend the monthly reconciliation meeting.”*

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

9. DSA SHOULD UPDATE ITS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO AGREE WITH DAILY OPERATIONS.

Home Services Policies & Procedures do not represent the practices followed. For example, Section 9: specifies that all new employees and volunteers are required to attend the City’s New Employee Orientation when, in practice, only new employees attend the training, not volunteers.

Though the Home Services policies and procedures were last updated June 2012, they do not fully agree with the daily practices and operations of the division. DSA management acknowledged that the policies and procedures are a work in progress and need to be updated further to correct discrepancies.

Policies and procedures that reflect the daily operations of a division help to avoid confusion for employees.

GFOA Best Practices state that effective policies and procedures are an essential component of any truly comprehensive internal control framework. A well-designed and properly maintained system for documenting policies and procedures enhances both accountability and consistency. Practices, policies and procedures should be evaluated annually.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSA should:

- Review the Home Services Policies & Procedures for discrepancies, and
- Amend and update the Policies & Procedures to accurately reflect the daily operations of Home Services.

RESPONSE FROM DSA:

*“DSA agrees with Finding #9. This finding highlighted the importance of revisiting the recently developed Home Services Policies & Procedures Manual. The DSA and recognizes that the policies procedures manual is a dynamic document that will change on a continuous basis. The Senior Affairs Construction Supervisor, Senior Affairs Program Manager, and the Social Services Division Manager will convene to review the current policies & procedures manual in its entirety and make the necessary updates so that they are an accurate reflection of the daily operations of Home Services. The Home Services team will be required to have refresher training on the policies and procedures manual via a PowerPoint training. They will receive the latest copy of the Home Services Policies & Procedures manual at the training session.”*



ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE

*“Friday, May 31, 2013.”*

10. THE CAO SHOULD ENSURE A SAFETY INSPECTION IS CONDUCTED ON THE ABANDONED BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE HOME SERVICES OFFICE.

The Home Services office is located adjacent to a dilapidated City owned building. The condition involves broken glass, rotten wood, as well as nesting birds. Additionally, the breaker box for the Home Services office is located in the abandoned building.



Nesting birds

Roof



**Building Exterior – Broken glass**



**Building Exterior – wood**



**Breaker box**

The City has not taken action to prevent the building's condition from deteriorating further as there appears to be confusion among the departments as to which City department owns the building.

The building is not in compliance with the Albuquerque City Ordinance, and Home Services employees may be at risk of injury or illness as the result of the adjacent building's condition.

According to the Albuquerque City Ordinance § 14-3-5-14 VACANT BUILDING MAINTENANCE, (D):

Albuquerque Code Enforcement shall inspect the vacant building for the purpose of determining the structural integrity of the vacant building; the repairs necessary to ensure its structural integrity; that it will be safe for entry by fire fighters and police officers in time of emergency; and that the vacant building and its contents do not present a hazard to the public during the time that the building remains vacant.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The CAO should:

- Request that a safety inspection of the building be conducted, and
- Notify the City department which owns the building so that appropriate action may be taken to address deficiencies.

**RESPONSE FROM THE CAO:**

***“The CAO requested that the City of Albuquerque Risk Management perform a safety inspection of the building. The Loss Prevention Manager made a site visit to the abandoned building on March 7, 2013, and stated, ‘this building would cost more to clean than it is worth’ and advised that the abandoned building be demolished. The following items were noted during the inspection of the building:***

- ***“Massive hole in the roof***
- ***“Internal wooden supports exposed to the elements causing advanced rot in most of them***
- ***“Pigeons droppings have soiled the place and contributed to the rotting of cross beams***
- ***“Pigeon droppings inches deep causing a hazardous repertory environment***
- ***“Electrical boxes with live power of 220/110 (unknown supply destination)***
- ***“The building has become a depository for trash***
- ***“The wooden walls are soiled with pigeon droppings”***

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE**

***“Complete.”***

**AUDITOR’S COMMENT**

The City of Albuquerque Risk Management Division has completed the safety inspection. The demolition of the building is not complete.

**CONCLUSION**

The DSA Home Services Division has opportunities for improvement in the tracking of its activities.

- Home Services should track its supplies inventory to reduce the potential for loss, and to determine accurate costs for the various services provided.
- Home Services should analyze information available on repair projects to increase efficiencies, and to develop goals and performance standards for Home Services employees. Implementing a tracking system such as Yardi could increase the opportunities for analysis of the Home Services programs.
- Home Services should track volunteers' names and contact information so the volunteers can be thanked and encouraged to volunteer again.
- Home Services can increase the value of the services provided by asking each client to respond to a satisfaction survey after the completion of each project. The survey responses will provide valuable feedback on employee performance and possible improvements. The satisfaction surveys can be mailed with a request for donation letter to increase controls over donations and remind clients of the value of the services they received.

By implementing the recommendations in this report, DSA Home Services can improve upon the valuable services it provides to the senior citizens of Albuquerque.

We appreciate the assistance and cooperation of the Department of Senior Affairs – Home Services personnel during the audit.

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Contract Auditor

REVIEWED:

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Internal Audit Manager

APPROVED:

APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION:

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Carmen Kavelman, CPA, CISA, CGAP  
Director, Office of Internal Audit

---

Chairperson, Accountability in Government  
Oversight Committee