



CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR

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FACT SHEET

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Report: 2011-041

The California State Auditor released the following report today:

Recommendations Not Fully Implemented After One Year

The Omnibus Audit Accountability Act of 2006

BACKGROUND

The California State Auditor offers government decision makers solutions for streamlining or improving processes which, if implemented, could ultimately save taxpayers millions of dollars or make other qualitative changes. It also offers transparent findings that are free from outside influence, including that of the Legislature, governor, and the subjects of our audits and investigations. As the independent external auditor, we ensure that public programs are delivered in the most efficient and effective manner and that public funds are spent wisely, benefiting all Californians.

The State Auditor's work brings the greatest returns when auditees act upon the findings and recommendations. For example, in a report regarding the state's Safely Surrendered Baby Law (law), issued in 2008, we made several recommendations to the Department of Social Services (Social Services) for changes to the program so that the law would have greater impact. Although Social Services has not fully implemented some of our recommendations, it has fully implemented several others—it clarified the definition of safe surrender, corrected previous erroneous information regarding confidentiality, and improved the method used to capture medical information that could be vital to the health of a surrendered child. Social Services' ongoing improvements to its administrative practices will help to ensure continuing viability of this life-saving program—from the program's inception in 2001 through March 31, 2011, parents safely surrendered 407 newborns.

The Omnibus Audit Accountability Act of 2006 (Accountability Act) requires state agencies to report to us their status in implementing the recommendations we make in our audit reports. Further, the Accountability Act requires the State Auditor to annually report to the Legislature the recommendations that have been outstanding for a year or more and that state agencies have yet to fully implement.

RESULTS

From January 2005 through October 2010, the State Auditor's Office issued 98 reports for audits of state agencies requested through the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, legislation, or as a result of an investigation. Based on the most recent responses from state agencies, we reported the following:

- There were 990 recommendations to the audited state agencies in those reports. Although state agencies implemented approximately 83 percent of our recommendations, we identified 168 recommendations made to 32 state agencies that had been outstanding at least one year, of which 97 were included in last year's Accountability Act report published in January 2011.
- Based on the most recent responses obtained from state agencies, 40 of the 168 recommendations outstanding at least one year, and some as long as five years, have now been fully implemented.
- Although some agencies reported that they will begin or continue fully implementing the recommendations within six months, others did not provide an implementation date. Still other agencies either reported that they do not plan to fully implement certain recommendations for several years or they will not implement the recommendations at all. For nearly 16 percent of the recommendations that have not been fully implemented, the department responsible has expressed that it will not implement the recommendation.

