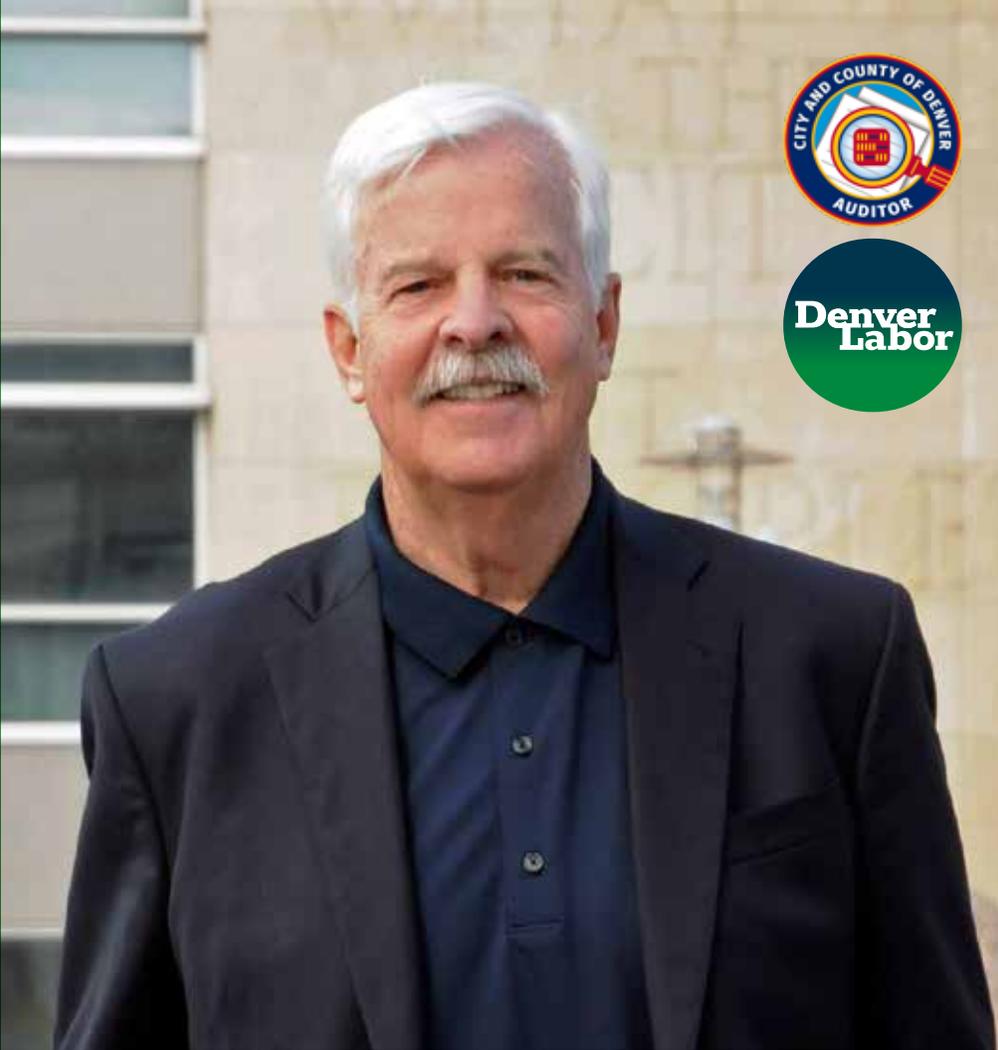


Denver Auditor's Office

2022 ACTION CARD



YEAR IN REVIEW

Your voice matters — and we heard you loud and clear as we worked to align our priorities with those of the community.

In 2021, we took steps to further hold city government accountable and championed efficient use of limited public resources in support of a strong pandemic recovery in Denver. City leaders strive to equitably support the recovery of residents, businesses, and everyone who cares about Denver. Our audit work can help them achieve efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and transparency.

Our Denver Labor wage enforcement team worked in 2021 with both employers and workers to successfully resolve hundreds of thousands of dollars in underpayments. We also built strong relationships with community groups, business organizations, and foreign consulates to educate residents about wage rights and ordinance compliance requirements in both English and Spanish. Read about some of our success stories on the next pages.

Our function as an independent agency serves as a tool for good government in the city. Your input matters to us — and to other city leaders. By continuing to support our work and elevate the issues we cover, you help ensure Denver's leaders take meaningful action.

Our 2022 Action Card looks ahead at action you can take to support our work and your community. We will walk you through some of the key audits we've completed recently, updates from our wage education and enforcement programs, and some top-priority plans for 2022.

SAMPLE 2021 AUDITS

Parks Legacy Plan OCTOBER 2021

This audit examined how Denver uses the voter-approved 0.25% sales and use tax increase designated to support park maintenance and the purchase of new parkland, among other things. We found that while the city decided to expand the parks system on several occasions — creating a need for even more staffing and maintenance — preexisting parks are not up to established standards for maintenance, safety, and cleanliness.

Construction Manager/General Contractor Project Delivery Method SEPTEMBER 2021

Denver did not effectively manage a recent construction project, resulting in a high risk of overpaying and a potential lack of fair competition in subcontracting. We found the city relied too much on its contractor for the Northfield Fire Station construction project, possibly leading to the city paying too much for the project.

Airport Parking Shuttle System AUGUST 2021

Denver's airport isn't doing enough to ensure the shuttles running from the parking lots to the terminals and concourses are on time and that the company running them isn't overcharging. We found shuttles were late, neither the airport nor the vendor were sufficiently monitoring customer complaints, and the process to award the shuttle contract wasn't competitive enough.

Coronavirus Relief Funding JULY 2021

The City and County of Denver did a good job managing the process for spending a portion of the COVID-19 pandemic-relief funds it received from the federal government in 2020 through the Coronavirus Relief Fund — created as part of the CARES Act. Federal aid was used for food assistance, public health efforts, economic support, and individual support. The city could do more to track interest on the received funds and offer stronger guidance to agencies for tracking spending.

Compensation Setting Analysis FEBRUARY 2021

Denver cannot systematically track employee data to ensure there is no bias in pay for all genders, races, or ethnicities. We intended to analyze pay equity for thousands of Denver employees, but we found the city doesn't track the information and city officials are unable to perform regular, accurate checkups on bias or inequity.

Denver Art Museum JANUARY 2021

The Denver Art Museum's agreement with the city is unclear and lacks detail regarding which entity owns what and who is responsible for covering significant costs. The audit team's ability to fully assess the degree to which the city is fully informed of its assets at the museum was limited because museum officials refused to provide a full digital copy of the museum's collection management database.

➔ **ACTION POINT** – *Some city agencies prioritize our recommendations more highly than others. When agencies agree with our recommendations, we anticipate change will happen — and that constitutes audit success. If the city takes no action or incomplete action, it's a disservice to the public. Let your city leaders know which topics are most important to you and make sure they know you want to see the improvements we recommend.*

UPCOMING AUDITS

Homeless Encampments

This audit will evaluate Denver's oversight of encampments of people experiencing homelessness. This may include program costs, encampment cleanup processes and costs, and community impact.

Affordable Housing

This audit will review how the city uses its funding and may also assess the efficiency and effectiveness of how the city creates and manages affordable housing projects.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This audit will review the city's approach to ensuring that stated diversity, equity, and inclusion goals are incorporated into city programs and directives requirements.

Campaign Finance

This audit will review the internal controls and management associated with the city's processes and procedures for campaign finance.

Residential Permitting

This audit may assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the permitting process for residential dwellings.

Construction Audits

This continued series of audits focuses on various risks in construction projects and practices. Selections may include projects at the airport, city capital construction projects, or bond projects. Audits may include a review of the rules and regulations around construction, internal controls, and project management practices.

➔ **ACTION POINT** – *Share your experiences with us. In the 2022 Audit Plan, we adjusted our agenda to match the priorities we heard from the community, including the addition of the encampments audit. When we hear from more and more people about the same concerns, we know that's something we should take a closer look at. Email your audit comments to auditor@denvergov.org.*



PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY

We use the highest standards to achieve our annual Audit Plan goals with an emphasis on equity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In 2021, the Association of Local Government Auditors recognized our team with an Exemplary Knighton Award for the 2020 audit of the Neighborhood Sidewalk Repair Program — an audit still impacting our community today. Awards like this are important because they let the public know they can trust the work we do on their behalf and that it is of the highest quality.

DENVER LABOR



MINIMUM WAGE

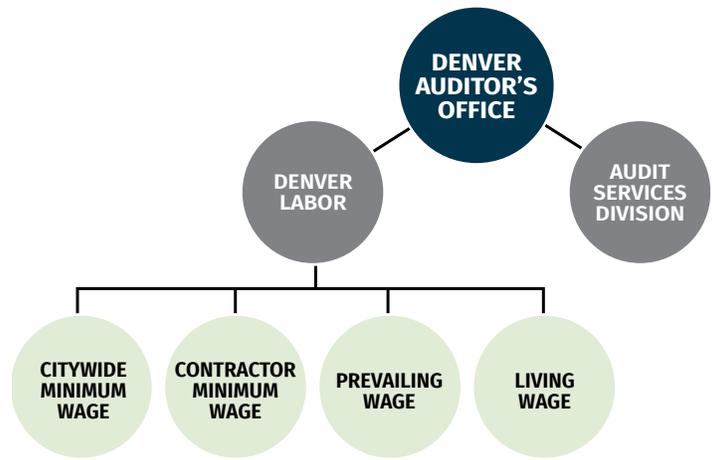
Our office worked with employers and employees in 2021 to increase community awareness and compliance with Denver's new citywide minimum wage. Denver's City Council passed the minimum wage ordinance in 2019 and the first citywide minimum wage took effect at the start of 2020. In 2021, the minimum wage was \$14.77 per hour with few exceptions. In 2022, the citywide minimum wage will increase again to \$15.87 per hour.

Denver Labor's goal is to protect Denver's employers and employees and ensure everyone is paid according to the law. Our team of analysts investigate 100% of wage complaints. In the first two years of citywide minimum wage enforcement, we used a complaint-based system to recover unpaid wages and to track data about industry compliance and community needs. This helped prepare us for a data-driven, proactive enforcement method in 2022.

In just one example of an investigation this year, we worked with a local restaurant after an employee told us they were underpaid. Our investigation found the employer had not paid the citywide minimum wage in 2020 or 2021. The restaurant reacted quickly and returned nearly \$18,000 to 20 employees. Using collaborative investigation and resolution techniques, we promote positive outcomes on behalf of all members of our community.

Our office also worked to enforce the city's contractor minimum wage, which increased to \$15 per hour in July. This wage covers workers on city projects who weren't previously covered by the prevailing wage.

➔ **ACTION POINT** – Every worker in Denver deserves to be paid at least the minimum wage. Visit our website for resources to help both workers and businesses as you navigate the city's wage ordinances. Tools include an address finder to see if your place of work qualifies for the citywide minimum wage, a tips tracker for the food and beverage industry, and a minimum wage calculator. Visit denvergov.org/minimumwage for more.



PREVAILING WAGE

Contractors and subcontractors doing work at or in connection with the operation of any public building or doing public work on behalf of the City and County of Denver must pay their workers the prevailing wage. Denver Labor is looking deeper and analyzing more details in payrolls and invoices than ever before to ensure thousands of workers across the city receive the money they are owed.

Through outreach, education, and investigation, our prevailing wage team works with both employers and employees. Our team helps keep business moving and city funds going out the door to contractors and workers as quickly and efficiently as possible.

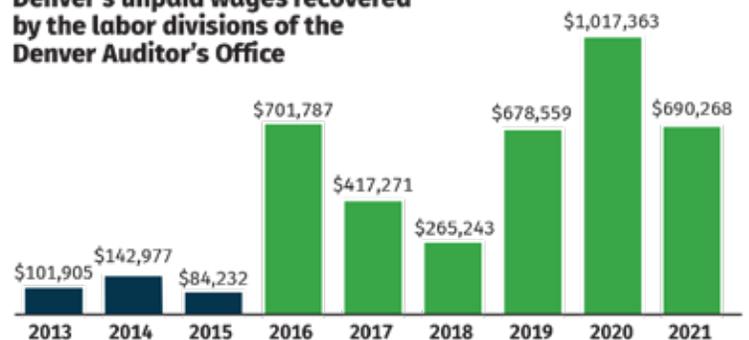
Denver Labor provides seminars and training courses to employers and community groups throughout the year and upon request. We can accommodate training and event requests in English and Spanish, both virtually and in person.

City leaders are supporting Denver's economic recovery by kickstarting projects throughout the community. In Denver's increasingly competitive job market, both employers and employees win when companies offer good wages that at least align with the law. Employers ensure positive customer experiences, top-quality work, and stability in staffing by paying their workers in full.

Our goal is to encourage cooperation and use education as our primary tool for community success.

➔ **ACTION POINT** – If you or someone you know might have been underpaid at work, we might have a check waiting for you. Check out our "Are You Owed Money" webpage to see if you, a family member, or a friend's name is on the list. And if you think you were underpaid but we haven't investigated yet, send us a complaint by filling out a complaint form online in English or Spanish or email us at wagecomplaints@denvergov.org.

Denver's unpaid wages recovered by the labor divisions of the Denver Auditor's Office





I'M DENVER AUDITOR TIMOTHY M. O'BRIEN, CPA.

I'm serving my second term as your independent Auditor. My office serves as a check and balance to Denver's "strong mayor" government and enforces wage laws. I'm a licensed CPA with more than 40 years of auditing and accounting experience, including producing more than 750 performance and financial audits. I previously served as the Colorado State Auditor for 11 years.

This 2022 Action Card provides an overview of our work for anyone in the community who cares about what's happening in Denver. Constituents sometimes ask me: How do we know you're doing what you said you would? This Action Card is one of many tools we use to keep you updated and hold ourselves accountable.

For suggestions, questions, or concerns, email auditor@denvergov.org. Stay in touch with our office and our work by following us on social media, and sign up for our monthly email newsletter at denvergov.org/auditor.



CONNECT WITH US

We believe in transparency and accountability in local government. In our office, we continuously explore new ways to reach members of the public in ways that matter.

You can find us anytime on our website, Nextdoor, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. In 2021, we made our work even more accessible by moving our website to a platform with new language and ADA access tools available. If you need help accessing or finding any material, don't hesitate to let us know. We will be happy to help.

Read a Spanish version of this Action Card on our website, where you can also find other wage and audit resources in Spanish and other languages.

We work with community groups, registered neighborhood organizations, businesses, and other organizations to spread the word about what we do. If you'd like to hear from us, please invite us to an upcoming meeting.

Watch our "Wages Wednesday" live tutorials on Facebook to ask questions about Denver Labor and don't miss our "Ask the Auditor" series every month on Denver 8 TV.

➔ **ACTION POINT** – Sign up for our monthly email newsletter to get updates about recent audits, Denver Labor news, and upcoming trainings and events. Email us your questions and comments.

EMAIL: [AUDITOR@DENVERGOV.ORG](mailto:auditor@denvergov.org)

WEBSITE: [DENVERGOV.ORG/AUDITOR](https://denvergov.org/auditor)



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