

# Audit at a glance



## Safety and Security of City Facilities

JUNE 2020

**ABOUT** | The responsibility for ensuring city facility safety and security for employees and the public lies with multiple city agencies, including the Department of General Services and the Department of Finance, as well as with contracted security services.

Existing practices are driven by different city executive orders and policies, some of which are outdated. Additionally, while some city agencies have emphasized a need for better facility safety and security practices, many initiatives are in reaction to a specific incident and are not supported by a risk, or needs, assessment.

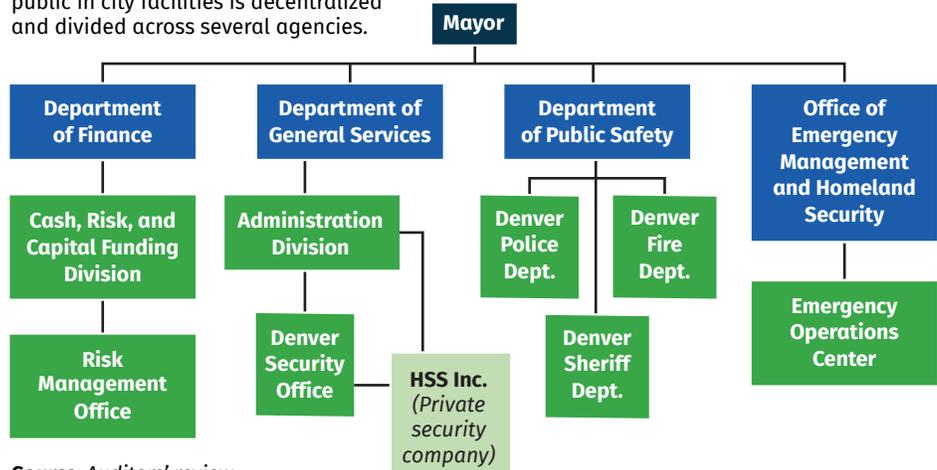
## In the report

### FINDING 1: The City and County of Denver Has Not Sufficiently Prioritized the Safety and Security of City Facilities

- The city does not have a citywide strategic plan for ensuring the safety and security of city facilities. Generally speaking, the city's annual budget — which includes strategies to achieve city agencies' missions — does not outline citywide strategic plans for addressing facility safety and security.
- While some city agencies involved in city facility safety and security — including the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Department of General Services — have agency-specific strategies outlined in the budget, they do not address safety and security of all city facilities, or they reference outdated practices.
- Additionally, we found:
  - Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined to ensure sufficient safety and security of city facilities; and
  - The city's lack of prioritization has resulted in a fragmented approach to safety and security of city facilities.

### Citywide Safety and Security Organizational Structure

The responsibility for ensuring safety and security for elected officials, employees, and the public in city facilities is decentralized and divided across several agencies.



Source: Auditors' review of documentation and interviews

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**FINDING 2: Existing Safety and Security Initiatives for City Facilities Are Not Adequate**

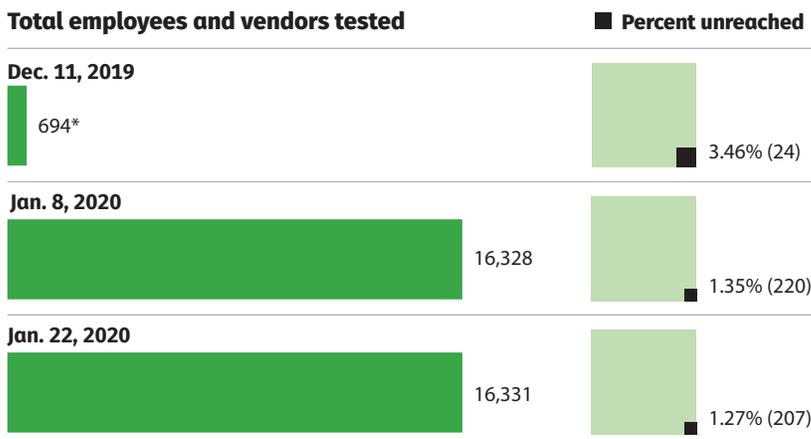
- Because the city lacks clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a citywide strategic plan, the city cannot ensure its safety and security initiatives for city facilities are effective.
- While individual city agencies have started several initiatives to improve safety and security of city facilities — such as creating the Denver Security Office in 2018 to address identified security concerns and implementing new safety trainings under the DenverReady program — auditors identified problems in several of these actions.
- Specifically, the city does not have:
  - A formal approach to perform facility vulnerability assessments;
  - A program to adequately train employees on evacuation and drill procedures;
  - Effective policies and procedures for access and badging; and
  - Effective policies and procedures to ensure all city employees and vendors are notified of incidents.

**FINDING 3: The City Is Not Always Receiving Security Services in Alignment with Contractual Requirements or Leading Security Practices**

- As part of security operations, the city uses contracted security guards from HSS Inc. for certain safety- and security-related duties at city buildings — such as screening visitors with X-ray machines and metal detectors to prevent them from bringing dangerous items into buildings, patrolling both the interior and exterior of buildings to identify safety or security concerns, and assisting with emergency evacuations.
- We determined General Services’ contract administration and monitoring practices were insufficient to ensure HSS’ services were both in compliance with the city’s contract and in alignment with national leading practices.
- For example, we observed HSS’ security practices for some areas — such as metal detector screenings of visitors and responses to emergencies and incidents — were often inconsistent across city buildings, and the current expectations of both the city and HSS management were not always reflected in HSS’ policies and procedures.
- Despite this, our audit did find HSS was compliant with the contract by providing mandatory staff and having required security training courses available to security staff. Additionally, we observed security staff were generally effective in some duties, such as using X-ray scanning procedures to identify visitors’ prohibited items.

**Unreached Employees and Vendors**

General Services, in conjunction with the governance committee, sent three test notifications using Everbridge to city employees at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020. As many as 220 city employees and vendors were not reached by any means of contact — email, phone, or text message — during the three Everbridge tests.



\*Only General Services, Emergency Management, and Technology Services employees tested on Dec. 11, 2019.

Source: Auditor’s Office analysis of the Dec. 11, 2019; Jan. 8, 2020; and Jan. 22, 2020, tests of the Everbridge notification system.

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