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**State Auditor Tim Keller Investigation Reveals Likely Embezzlement
at the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council**

\$18,225 for people with disabilities diverted into an employee's personal bank accounts

SANTA FE, NM – Today, New Mexico State Auditor Tim Keller released an investigation into possible theft by an employee of New Mexico's Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC). The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) found that \$18,225 of public money was diverted into the personal bank accounts of the former Center for Self-Advocacy Program Director. The former Director appears to have taken funds intended to pay people with disabilities for training classes and instead deposited the payments into his own bank accounts for personal use.

"People with developmental disabilities and their families depend on the Development Disabilities Planning Council for vital services to improve quality of life," stated State Auditor Tim Keller. "It is unconscionable that any staff would apparently steal money from the disability programs they are charged with administering. We appreciate the Council for bringing these concerns forward and for working to address oversight issues that came to light."

The DDPC notified the OSA about concerns it had involving training payments. The OSA reviewed over 400 checks issued to training participants between 2013 and 2016. The OSA subpoenaed the former Director's bank and determined that at least 200 of these checks, totaling \$18,225, were deposited into the former Director's personal accounts.

"Based on likely criminal violations including embezzlement, we have referred our findings to the Second Judicial District Attorney's Office for possible prosecution," stated Keller.

The OSA also recommended a number of corrective actions to strengthen DDPC's internal controls. The DDPC is a state agency with the mission to promote advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Please see the report here: http://www.saonm.org/media/uploads/Risk_Review_-_Developmental_Disabilities_Planning_Council.pdf

The Office of the State Auditor helps government work better by providing transparency and accountability for government spending; informing policy choices; and tackling fraud, waste and abuse. OSA is an independently elected executive agency responsible for examining the use of public dollars in New Mexico.