

Buffalo Urban Development Corporation

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2023 Assessment of the Effectiveness of Internal Controls

Management of the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC) is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal controls over financial reporting. The accounting, financial reporting and cash management functions rely on a system of controls outlined in the organization's Financial Policies & Procedures documentation. Internal controls are reviewed continuously, and adjustments are made as needed. Many administrative processes (e.g. payroll, cash management) are performed by employees of the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) under a shared services agreement due to shared office space. ECIDA's CFO serves as BUDC's Treasurer, and ECIDA's Accounting Manager serves as BUDC's Assistant Treasurer. Examples of key internal controls are:

- Payroll: BUDC's payroll is processed by a third-party processor, Bene-Care Payroll, LLC. The CFO and Bookkeeper verify that payments are only made to employees that are entitled to be paid. As a service organization Bene-Care Payroll, LLC. undergoes a Service Organization Controls (SOC) audit each year. Their most recent SOC 1 audit asserts that the internal controls in place at Bene-Care Payroll, LLC are suitably designed and operating as intended to provide reasonable assurance that control objectives were achieved.
 - Risk = Low
- Cash Disbursements: Disbursements are made primarily by check and wire transfer. Invoices require approval (physical or email) by the purchaser prior to payment. Invoices are reviewed by the CFO prior to processing by the Bookkeeper. Two signatures are required on all checks (President, Executive VP, Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer). All wire transfers require dual approval. The CFO retrieves and reviews all bank statements and approves all bank reconciliations. Only Finance Department staff have access to online banking sites.
 - Risk = Low
- Cash Receipts: Checks received are logged by ECIDA's Receptionist and forwarded to the Accounting Manager. The Accounting Manager stamps checks "for deposit only", codes the checks and prepares deposits. The Bookkeeper deposits checks at the bank. The CFO reviews and initials deposit slips and deposit receipts and verifies proper account coding. The Bookkeeper records deposits in the general ledger software. Wire/ACH receipts are reviewed and coded by the CFO or Accounting Manager and are recorded in the general ledger software by the Bookkeeper.
 - Risk = Low

All computers are password protected and require multi-factor authentication to log in. General ledger software is separately password protected. Access to the general ledger software is restricted to the CFO, Accounting Manager and Bookkeeper.

BUDC is subject to an annual financial statement audit by an independent accounting firm, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards. While auditors are not engaged to perform an audit of internal controls, the auditors do review and test internal controls as part of their audit procedures. There have been no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal controls nor other management letter recommendations noted by the independent auditors.

In summary, the present internal control structure appears to be sufficient to meet internal control objectives in preventing and detecting errors and irregularities.

This statement certifies that the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation followed a process that assessed and documented the adequacy of its internal control structure and policies for the year ending December 31, 2023. To the extent that deficiencies were identified, the authority has developed corrective action plans to reduce any corresponding risk.