



OFFICE OF THE
STATE AUDITOR

News Release
For Immediate Release
November 16, 2021

Office of the State Auditor Announces Appointment of State Privacy Officer
Whitney A. Phillips, Ph.D. Joining Office in Newly Created Position

Salt Lake City, UTAH – The Office of the State Auditor (Office) today announced the appointment of Whitney A. Phillips, Ph.D. to the newly created position of State Privacy Officer.

As State Privacy Officer, Dr. Phillips will focus on the privacy practices of designated governmental entities, including cities, counties, school districts, higher education, and colleges and universities. This focus includes responsibility to:

- Analyze and report on government privacy practices
- Provide educational and training materials
- Identify privacy practices that pose the greatest risk to individual privacy and prioritize those privacy practices for review
- Respond to requests from individuals to review a designated government entity's privacy practice
- Make privacy recommendations to the State Legislature

Dr. Phillips will also work with the Personal Privacy Oversight Commission, also authorized by HB 243 during the 2021 General Legislative Session.

Dr. Phillips served as the Chief Privacy Officer for the Utah State Board of Education since 2016. She has held a variety of prior positions in education and government. She is a Certified Information Privacy Manager (CIPM) and a Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP). Dr. Phillips received her Ph.D. in Educational Inquiry, Measurement, and Evaluation from Brigham Young University. She also earned her M.Ed. from the University of Utah in Special Education, an M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from BYU and her B.A. in English Teaching Secondary Education also from BYU.

Dr. Phillips said, “The State of Utah is a national leader in recognizing that along with our adoption of technology, we must consider serious threats and vulnerabilities to both our systems and individual freedoms. I look forward to building public trust for all Utahns through collaboration from all levels and government divisions to balance government accountability and personal liberty.”

State Auditor John Dougall commented, “Dr. Phillips’ experience as the Chief Privacy Officer for the State Board of Education, as well as her prior experience and significant educational

accomplishments make her an excellent fit for the newly created position of State Privacy Officer. I look forward to her work to help governmental entities strengthen their privacy practices to better protect every Utahn's sensitive personal data."

Information on the State Privacy Officer and State Personal Privacy Commission may be found on the Office's website, auditor.utah.gov. The Privacy Page is available specifically at <https://auditor.utah.gov/privacy/>.

About the Office of the State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program performance audits, performing fraud and compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah's government agencies.

The Office also provides interactive graphical tools to help taxpayers and policymakers gain greater insight into governmental financial activities.

The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected directly by the state's citizens every 4 years. The role of the Utah State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see auditor.utah.gov.

Contact:

Nicole Davis
Public Information Officer
Office of the State Auditor
801-678-4835
ndavis@utah.gov