



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
ULSTER COUNTY COMPTROLLER  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**COMMITTED TO THE COMMISSARY**  
**Sheriff's Office Proactively Monitoring Inmate Account**

Kingston, NY (August 16, 2016) – Ulster County Comptroller Elliott Auerbach would like to announce the completion of an audit of the Ulster County Inmate Commissary Fund. After experiencing staff turnover, the Sheriff's Office asked the Comptroller to perform the review to ensure that "[adequate] controls surrounding the financial operations and general accounting of the [account]" were established and being followed. The report concluded that the "commissary appears to be in good standing" and is complying with New York State Correction Law.

"Our recommendations primarily focused on the need to cross-train and phase-in appropriate employees so that gaps don't arise when important staffers leave key positions," said Auerbach. "On a larger level, I think that every office should be afforded the resources to transition old and new hires so that business continues as usual. However, beyond that feeling, we found that current procedures could be updated to reflect a more thorough replacement and disposal protocol for purchased items and that greater backup could be included with purchase forms."

The Inmate Commissary Fund is operated and maintained at the Sheriff's discretion. The account is funded through purchases made by inmates at the commissary for basic items such as snacks, personal hygiene products, postage supplies, and writing materials. The profits from sales are put back into the account for purposes of prisoner welfare, including recreation equipment, laundry machines, and inmate payroll.

"Anytime a department loses a long-time or essential employee, there's a period of readjustment and reflection as to the roles and responsibilities of members of the office," said Auerbach. "I give credit to Sheriff Van Blarcum for initiating this dialogue, taking an interest in assuring the accuracy of these transactions, and striving to improve upon any areas of concern."

A copy of the audit may be found on the Comptroller's website at [www.YourEyesOnUlster.com](http://www.YourEyesOnUlster.com) or at the link:

[http://ulstercountyny.gov/comptroller/sites/default/files/Sheriff%27s%20Office%20Inmate%20Commissary%20Audit%2007.2016\\_0.pdf](http://ulstercountyny.gov/comptroller/sites/default/files/Sheriff%27s%20Office%20Inmate%20Commissary%20Audit%2007.2016_0.pdf)

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