

**PUBLIC EMPLOYEES'
RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO**

FINANCIAL AUDIT

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023



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OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

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<i>Deputy State Auditor</i>	<i>Marisa Edwards, CPA</i>
<i>Contractor</i>	<i>CliftonLarsonAllen LLP</i>

REPORT NUMBER 2313F

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

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PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Financial Audit

Report Summary

Year ended December 31, 2023

Purpose and Scope

The Office of the State Auditor engaged CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA) to conduct a financial and compliance audit of the Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado (Colorado PERA) for the year ended December 31, 2023. CLA performed this audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We conducted the related fieldwork from December 2023 to June 2024.

The purposes and scope of our audit was to:

- Express an opinion on the basic financial statements of Colorado PERA as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023. This includes a consideration of internal control as required by auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and *Government Auditing Standards*.
- Evaluate Colorado PERA's compliance and report on internal control over financial reporting based on our audit of the basic financial statements performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.
- Evaluate progress in implementing prior audit findings and recommendations.

Audit Opinion and Reports

We expressed an unmodified opinion on Colorado PERA's basic financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023.

There were no audit adjustments proposed and made to the financial statements.

We issued a report on Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters based on an audit of basic financial statements performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses. A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. We noted no instances involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be a material weakness.

Summary of Key Findings

We did not identify any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in Colorado PERA's internal controls during our audit of the 2023 financial statements.

Summary of Progress in Implementing Prior Year Audit Recommendations

There were no outstanding prior year audit recommendations as of our 2023 audit.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Financial Audit

Description of the Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado

Year Ended December 31, 2023

Organization

Colorado PERA was established in 1931. Colorado PERA administers cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit plans for the State Division Trust Fund, School Division Trust Fund, Local Government Division Trust Fund, and Judicial Division Trust Fund, and a single-employer defined benefit plan for the Denver Public Schools Trust Fund (Division Trust Funds). Colorado PERA also administers cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit other postemployment benefit plans (Health Care Trust Fund and Denver Public Schools Health Care Trust Fund), a multiple-employer private purpose trust fund (Life Insurance Reserve), two multiple-employer defined contribution plans and one single-employer defined contribution plan. The purpose of the Division Trust Funds is to provide benefits to members at retirement or disability, or to their beneficiaries in the event of death. Members of Colorado PERA are employed by public employers located in the State of Colorado and affiliated with Colorado PERA.

Responsibility for the organization and administration of the Division Trust Funds, Health Care Trust Funds, the Life Insurance Reserve, and the defined contribution plans is placed with the Board of Trustees of Colorado PERA.

The number of active affiliated employers for the five Division Trust Funds as of December 31, 2023 is listed below. The School and Denver Public Schools Divisions' employer counts include charter schools operating within the respective public school districts and under the Colorado Charter School Institute.

State	32
School	234
Local government	141
Judicial	2
Denver Public Schools	1
Total employers	<u>410</u>

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Financial Audit

Findings and Recommendations

Year ended December 31, 2023

We reported no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses during our 2023 audit.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Legislative Audit Committee and The Board of Trustees of
Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado
Denver, Colorado

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado (Colorado PERA), including the individual fund financial statements, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Colorado PERA's basic financial statements, as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the fiduciary net position of Colorado PERA as of December 31, 2023, and the changes in its fiduciary net position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. In addition, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to previously present fairly, in all material respects, the respective fiduciary net position of each individual fund of Colorado PERA as of December 31, 2023, and the respective changes in fiduciary net position thereof for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Colorado PERA and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Colorado PERA's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and Government Auditing Standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Colorado PERA's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Colorado PERA's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis, the division trust funds' schedules of changes in net pension liability and related ratios, employer and nonemployer contributions, and investment returns and related notes, and the health care trust funds' schedules of changes in net OPEB liability and related ratios, contributions from employers, and investment returns and related notes, as listed in the table of contents, be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with GAAS, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise Colorado PERA's basic financial statements. The schedules of administrative expenses, other additions, other deductions, investment expenses, and payments to consultants (supplementary information) are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS. In our opinion, the supplementary information is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the introductory, investment, actuarial and statistical sections but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

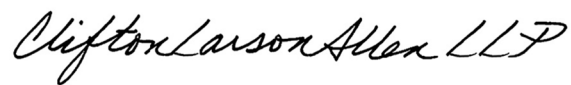
In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

Report on Summarized Comparative Information

We have previously audited Colorado PERA's 2022 financial statements, and we expressed unmodified opinions on the respective financial statements of Colorado PERA and of each individual fund as displayed in the basic financial statements in our report dated June 16, 2023. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended December 31, 2022, is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated June 21, 2024, on our consideration of Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

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CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Denver, Colorado
June 21, 2024

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL
REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN
AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

Legislative Audit Committee and The Board of Trustees of
Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado
Denver, Colorado

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado (Colorado PERA), as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023 and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Colorado PERA's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated June 21, 2024.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Colorado PERA's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Colorado PERA's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

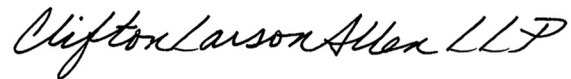
Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Colorado PERA's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "CliftonLarsonAllen LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Denver, Colorado
June 21, 2024



Independent Auditors' Communication to Those Charged With Governance

Legislative Audit Committee and The Board of Trustees of
Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado
Denver, Colorado

We have audited the basic financial statements of Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado (Colorado PERA), including the individual fund financial statements, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023, and have issued our report thereon dated June 21, 2024. We have previously communicated to you information about our responsibilities under auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and *Government Auditing Standards*, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit orally during our discussion on November 16, 2023 with the board of trustees. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

Our Responsibility Under Professional Standards

We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion about whether the financial statements, that have been prepared by management with the oversight of the Board of Trustees, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We have a responsibility to perform our audit of the financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (AICPA) and the standards applicable to financial statement audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. In carrying out this responsibility, we planned and performed the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free of material misstatement, whether caused by error or fraud. Because of the nature of audit evidence and the characteristics of fraud, we are to obtain reasonable, not absolute, assurance that material misstatements are detected. We have no responsibility to plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance that misstatements, whether caused by error or fraud, that are not material to the financial statements are detected. Our audit does not relieve management or the Board of Trustees of their responsibilities.

In addition, in planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Colorado PERA's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Colorado PERA's internal control. We also have a responsibility to communicate significant matters related to the financial statement audit that are, in our professional judgment, relevant to the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees in overseeing the financial reporting process. We are not required to design procedures for the purpose of identifying other matters to communicate to you.

Significant audit findings or issues

Qualitative aspects of accounting practices

Accounting policies

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by Colorado PERA are described in Note 2 to the financial statements.

Colorado PERA implemented the provisions of GASB Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements* for the year ended December 31, 2023. Due to the implementation of GASB Statement No. 96, Colorado PERA recognized a right-to-use subscription asset and a corresponding subscription liability.

We noted no transactions entered into by Colorado PERA during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements relate to the valuation of investments in private markets, the total pension liability, the total other post-employment benefit obligations (OPEB) liability and incurred but not reported claims.

We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the estimate of the fair value of certain alternative investments (private equity, real estate, hedge fund and other private market investments) in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. The estimates are primarily based upon amounts reported by the investment managers. The values for these investments are reported based upon the most recent financial data available and are adjusted for cash flows and other adjustments through December 31, 2023. Our audit procedures validated this approach through the use of confirmations sent directly to a sample of investment managers as well as through the review of recent audited fund financial statements and all adjustments from the audited financial statement date through the Colorado PERA's year-end.

The actuarial valuations for accounting purposes were based on the actuarial assumptions and methods adopted by the Board. In accordance with GASB 67, the total pension liability of the State, School, Local Government, Judicial, and Denver Public Schools Divisions was based upon the December 31, 2022 actuarial valuations. A total pension liability for each respective fund was determined as of December 31, 2023 using standard roll-forward techniques. In accordance with GASB 74, the total OPEB liability of the Health Care Trust Fund and Denver Public Schools Health Care Trust Fund was based upon the December 31, 2022 actuarial valuations. A total OPEB liability for each respective fund was determined as of December 31, 2023 using standard roll-forward techniques. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop these estimates in determining that the estimates are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Management's estimate of the claims incurred but not reported were based on computations performed based on prior claims experience and actual lag patterns of the Health Care Trust Funds. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the estimates of the claims incurred but not reported in determining they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Financial statement disclosures

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. There were no particularly sensitive financial statement disclosures.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

Significant unusual transactions

We identified no significant unusual transactions.

Difficulties encountered in performing the audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

Uncorrected misstatements

Professional standards require us to accumulate all misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management did not identify and we did not notify them of any uncorrected financial statement misstatements.

Corrected misstatements

Management did not identify and we did not notify them of any financial statement misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures.

Disagreements with management

For purposes of this communication, a disagreement with management is a disagreement on a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditors' report. No such disagreements arose during our audit.

Management representations

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated June 21, 2024.

Management consultations with other independent accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to Colorado PERA's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditors' opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

Significant issues discussed with management prior to engagement

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to engagement as Colorado PERA's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our engagement.

Required supplementary information

With respect to the required supplementary information (RSI) accompanying the financial statements, we made certain inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the RSI, including whether the RSI has been measured and presented in accordance with prescribed guidelines, whether the methods of measurement and preparation have been changed from the prior period and the reasons for any such changes, and whether there were any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement or presentation of the RSI. We compared the RSI for consistency with management's responses to the foregoing inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge obtained during the audit of the basic financial statements. Because these limited procedures do not provide sufficient evidence, we did not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

Supplementary information in relation to the financial statements as a whole

With respect to the schedules of administrative expenses, other additions, other deductions, investment expenses, and payments to consultants (collectively, the supplementary information) accompanying the financial statements, on which we were engaged to report in relation to the financial statements as a whole, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period or the reasons for such changes, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves. We have issued our report thereon dated June 21, 2024.

Other information included in annual reports

Other information (financial or nonfinancial information other than the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon) is being included in your annual comprehensive financial report (ACFR) and is comprised of the introductory, investment, actuarial and statistical sections. Our responsibility for the other information included in your ACFR does not extend beyond the financial information identified in our opinion on the financial statements. We have no responsibility for determining whether such other information is properly stated and do not have an obligation to perform any procedures to corroborate other information contained in your ACFR. We are required by professional standards to read the other information included in your ACFR and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the financial statements because the credibility of the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon may be undermined by material inconsistencies between the audited financial statements and other information. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report. Our auditors' report on the financial statements includes a separate section, "Other Information," which states we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance on the other information included in the annual report. We did not identify any material inconsistencies between the other information and the audited financial statements.

Legislative Audit Committee and The Board of Trustees of
Public Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado

* * *

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Legislative Audit Committee, Board of Trustees, and management of Colorado PERA and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties. However, upon release by the Legislative Audit Committee, the report is a public document.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "CliftonLarsonAllen LLP".

CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Denver, Colorado
June 21, 2024

