



Commonwealth of Virginia

Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor

**Auditor of Public Accounts
P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218**

December 17, 2009

The Honorable Valentine W. Southall Jr.
Chief Judge
City of Petersburg Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court
P. O. Box 24
Amelia, VA 23002

Audit Period: July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009
Court System: City of Petersburg
Judicial District: Eleventh

We are performing a statewide audit of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts. During our review of this court, we conducted certain audit procedures, as we deemed appropriate.

Management of this court is an important part of the court's accountability, since you are responsible for establishing and maintaining internal controls and complying with applicable laws and regulations. During our review, we noted certain matters that required management's attention and corrective action. These matters included:

Properly Approve the Reporting of Leave

The Judge does not approve the reporting of leave taken by the clerk. Instead, the clerk completes and approves her own leave report. Section 2102.3 of the Human Resources Policy Manual requires the supervising Judge to approve the reporting of the clerk's leave. Supervisory review and approval is an essential internal control to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of transactions. Allowing someone to prepare and approve their own leave without a supervisory review can result in both intentional and unintentional errors going undetected. We recommend the supervising Judge immediately begin reviewing and approving the reporting of the clerk's leave.

We acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK:alh

cc: The Honorable James E. Hume, Judge
Beneatha B. Simmons, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia