



# Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295

Richmond, Virginia 23218

**Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor**

March 1, 2010

The Honorable David F. Peterson  
Chief Judge  
County of Stafford Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court  
701 Princess Anne Street  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Audit Period: July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009  
Court System: County of Stafford  
Judicial District: Fifteenth

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 Assess Court Costs

The clerk did not properly enter and bill for court-appointed attorney fees, enter fines and costs involving local and state charges, or properly receipt collections into the Financial Management System. The auditor tested 49 cases and noted the following errors.

### Court Appointed Attorney Fees

- In two cases, the Clerk failed to bill for the Court Appointed Attorney fees involving local cases. Instead the Clerk billed the Commonwealth incorrectly, which paid \$600.
- In three cases, the clerk erroneously billed juveniles for court appointed attorney fees totaling \$120.
- In two cases, the Clerk failed to properly assess defendants court appointed attorney fees. This resulted in the miscoding of payments totaling \$480.

### Data Entry

- In one case, the Clerk failed to properly enter defendant court costs in the Financial Management System. This resulted in the miscoding of payments totaling \$25.

The Honorable David F. Peterson  
Chief Judge  
March 1, 2010  
Page Two

We recommend the clerk make the appropriate corrections to case paperwork. Further, we recommend the Clerk work with the Office of the Executive Secretary to receive training in the assessment of court costs.

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

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK:alh

cc: The Honorable Gerald F. Daltan, Judge  
The Honorable Julian W. Johnson, Judge  
James B. Thompson, Clerk  
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services  
Supreme Court of Virginia