



Martha S. Mavredes, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

January 30, 2015

The Honorable Sarah A. Rice
Chief Judge
County of Pittsylvania Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
275 South Main Street, Courthouse, Suite 3
Rocky Mount, VA 24151

Audit Period: July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014
Court System: County of Pittsylvania
Judicial District: Twenty-second

We are performing a statewide audit of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District 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 Bill and Collect Court Costs and Fines

The Clerk and her staff did not properly bill court costs and fines. In 28 cases tested, we noted the following errors.

- In one case, the Clerk over-charged the defendant \$120 in costs.
- In one local case, the Clerk incorrectly billed the wrong locality for \$120 in court appointed attorney fees.
- In one case, the Clerk did not bill the defendant for \$50 in fines.
- In one case, the Clerk miscoded a custody and visitation fee of \$25 as a time to pay fee.

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The Clerk should correct the specific cases noted above and institute a system of review to minimize the likelihood of billing errors going undetected. Finally, the Clerk should work with her staff to ensure they understand the billing and collection requirements and, if necessary, request additional training from the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

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

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MSM: clj

cc: The Honorable Brian H. Turpin, Judge
Cynthia Owen Keel, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia