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Auditor of Public Accounts

Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

March 28, 2017

The Honorable Shannon O. Hoehl
Chief Judge
County of Stafford Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
P. O. Box 86
Hanover, VA 23069

Audit Period: July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016
Court System: County of Stafford
Judicial District: Fifteenth

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 Fines and Costs

The Clerk did not properly bill and collect court fines and costs. In 41 cases tested, we noted the following errors.

- In four cases, defendants were not charged court fines and costs totaling \$596.
- In one case, the Clerk did not bill the locality for the court-appointed attorney fees related to a local case, resulting in a loss of revenue to the Commonwealth of \$120.
- In eight cases, the Clerk miscoded state violations as local.

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The Clerk and his staff should correct the specific cases noted above and should establish a system of review to minimize the likelihood of billing errors going undetected. In all cases, the Clerk should bill and collect court costs in accordance with Code of Virginia.

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

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MSM:alh

cc: The Honorable John E Franklin, Judge
The Honorable Julian W. Johnson, Judge
The Honorable Andrea M. Stewart, Judge
James B. Thompson, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia