



Martha S. Mavredes, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

January 4, 2016

The Honorable Rondelle Herman
Chief Judge
County of Henrico Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
P. O. Box 90775
Henrico, VA 23273

Audit Period: July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015
Court System: County of Henrico
Judicial District: Fourteenth

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 Complete and Maintain Waivers (New)

The former Clerks did not complete or maintain proper supporting documentation for attorney payments. Court appointed attorneys may request additional payment in excess of the statutory cap by submitting detailed waiver applications for approval by the Chief and Presiding Judges. In nine of 13 attorney invoices tested, the former Clerks either did not retain the proper documentation or the Chief Judge did not approve the application and invoice as required.

The new Clerk should require that all proper signatures are present and that waivers are completed in full and retained with the appropriate invoices as required by Court Appointed Counsel Procedures and Guidelines Manual.

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Properly Bill Court Fines and Costs (New)

The former Clerks did not properly bill court fines and costs. In 52 cases tested, we noted the following errors.

- In four cases, staff over-charged defendants a total of \$1,030 in court costs.
- In six cases, staff did not bill defendants for a total of \$909 in court costs and \$50 in fines.
- In four cases, staff did not properly submit attorney bills to the locality, resulting in a loss to the state of \$465.

The new Clerk should correct the specific cases noted above and institute a system of review to minimize the likelihood of billing errors going undetected. In addition, 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 Stuart L. Williams, Jr., Judge
The Honorable Randall G. Johnson, Jr., Judge
The Honorable Denis F. Soden, Judge
Shanda R. Ellis, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia