



Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295

Richmond, Virginia 23218

Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor

March 20, 2007

The Honorable Joi J. Taylor
Chief Judge
City of Richmond - Manchester Division General District Court
400 N. Ninth Street
Richmond, VA 23219

As part of our audit of the Virginia District Court System, we have audited the cash receipts and disbursements of the City of Richmond - Manchester Division General District Court for the period October 1, 2005 through December 31, 2006.

Our primary objectives were to test the accuracy of financial transactions recorded on the Court's financial management system; evaluate the Court's internal controls; and test its compliance with significant state laws, regulations, and policies. However, our audit was more limited than would be necessary to provide assurance on the internal controls or on overall compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

The results of our tests found the Court properly stated, in all material respects, the amounts recorded and reported in the financial management system. However, we noted weaknesses in internal controls and noncompliance with state laws, regulations, and policies that the Clerk needs to address as described below.

Properly Assess Fees

The Clerk and his staff did not follow proper assessment procedures as required by Code of Virginia, Sections 19.2-340 and 19.2-163 and the General District Court Manual. Specifically, we noted the following errors.

- In 17 of 40 cases tested, the Clerk and his staff did not apply the correct account codes and did not properly assess the costs for court appointed attorney or public defender. This error caused a loss of revenue to the Commonwealth of up to \$20 per case.
- In 17 of 40 cases tested, the Clerk did not bill the locality for the costs of the court appointed attorney or public defender when the defendant appeared as a result of a local warrant or summons. This error resulted in a loss of revenue to the Commonwealth of \$1,960.
- In 14 of 30 cases tested, the Clerk failed to assess the appropriate fine account for both state and local warrants/summons. This resulted in a \$300 loss of revenue to the Commonwealth and a \$2,900 loss of revenue to the locality.

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The Clerk needs to take corrective action to ensure staff understand and assess costs in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Local Ordinances, and the General District Court Manual. The Clerk should implement a monthly review of criminal cases to ensure the above issues are resolved.

We discussed these comments with the Clerk and we acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK:jth

cc: The Honorable Gregory L. Rupe, Judge
David M. Hicks, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia