



# Commonwealth of Virginia

**Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor**

**Auditor of Public Accounts  
P.O. Box 1295  
Richmond, Virginia 23218**

February 16, 2010

The Honorable Janice Justina Wellington  
Chief Judge  
County of Prince William Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court  
9311 Lee Avenue  
Manassas, VA 20110-5555

Audit Period: July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009  
Court System: County of Prince William  
Judicial District: Thirty-first

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 Bill Court Costs

The Clerk and her staff is not properly billing and collecting court appointed attorney fees involving local and state charges as required by Section 19.2-163 of the Code of Virginia. In six of ten cases tested, the Clerk's staff did not properly bill the locality for the court appointed attorney fees, involving a local case. Instead, the Clerk's staff erroneously billed the Commonwealth, which paid \$720 and miscoded the payment of unpaid court appointed attorney fees causing the Commonwealth to receive the collection.

We recommend the Clerk research all similar cases, make the appropriate corrections case paperwork, and where appropriate, bill the localities for the applicable court appointed attorney fees. Further, we recommend the Clerk and her staff work with the Office of the Executive Secretary to receive training in these billing practices.

## Properly Maintain Court Appointed Attorney Records

The Clerk does not consistently maintain court-appointed attorney timesheets or waivers as required by the Court Appointed Counsel Guidelines and Procedures Manual. The timesheet provides a detailed accounting of the time spent on a case and justification for additional fees requested. A waiver provides a

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detailed explanation of additional fees requested. We recommend the Clerk maintain records in accordance with the Court Appointed Counsel Guidelines and Procedures Manual.

During the audit period, the Supreme Court of Virginia had no formal guidance regarding approval of Clerk's leave submitted to the electronic leave reporting system. The Supreme Court of Virginia has since issued interim guidance regarding the implementation of internal controls over this process, and this court promptly implemented those controls.

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

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK:clj

cc: The Honorable William Alan Becker, Judge  
The Honorable George M. DePolo, Judge  
The Honorable Paul F. Gluchowski, Judge  
Frances H. Hedrick, Clerk  
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services  
Supreme Court of Virginia