



Staci A. Henshaw, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

February 11, 2025

The Honorable Tara D. Hatcher
Chief Judge
City of Colonial Heights Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

Audit Period: July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024
Court System: City of Colonial Heights
Judicial District: Twelfth

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 the following matter requiring management's attention and corrective action.

Properly Assess and Bill Court Costs

Repeat: No

The Clerk and her staff did not properly assess and bill court costs. In seven of 50 (14%) cases tested, we noted the following errors.

- The Clerk overcharged defendants in five cases a total of \$792 in court-appointed attorney fees.
- For two cases, the Clerk did not certify costs totaling \$406 to the Circuit Court.

The amounts above are based on actual errors noted within our sample of court transactions, the impact of which we did not project to all transactions of the court. The Clerk and her staff should correct the specific cases noted above, seek additional training in the assessment and billing of court costs, and establish a system of review to minimize the likelihood of billing errors going undetected. In all cases, the Clerk should assess and bill court costs in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

Tara D. Hatcher, Chief Judge

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We acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the Clerk and the Clerk's staff during this engagement.

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cc: The Honorable Scott David Landry, Judge
Evelyn Hall, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia