



Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts
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Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor

March 18, 2004

The Honorable Charles J. Maxfield
Chief Judge
County of Fairfax Juvenile and
Domestic Relations District Court
4000 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

As part of our audit of the Virginia District Court System, we have audited the cash receipts and disbursements of the County of Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court for the period January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003.

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; and no instances of noncompliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. However, we noted a weakness in internal controls that the Clerk needs to address as described below.

Establish Staff Accountability Over Cash

As noted in our previous audit, on any given day up to five staff use one cash drawer. This practice does not allow for adequate accountability and audit trail if cash shortages or overages occur. It may also hinder identifying individual cashier training issues. Although the Clerk contacted the Supreme Court of Virginia for guidance on establishing separate cash drawers for each employee, she has not implemented new procedures in the interim to provide proper staff accountability of cash. Interim procedures may include limiting receipting duties to an absolute minimum number of employees; and assigning separate cash bags for each employee's use. Employees could maintain the proceeds and receipts from their transactions in their own cash bag. The cash bags should be stored in the cash register drawer when not in use.

The Clerk should use separate cash drawers for each staff who performs cashiering duties. Separate cash drawers are a fundamental accountability control in any operation that has individuals collecting cash and offers

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the strongest internal control. The Clerk should implement interim procedures to provide accountability of cash until such time as separate cash drawers are available.

We discussed these comments with the Clerk on March 18, 2004 and we acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the Court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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cc: The Honorable Michael J. Valentine, Judge
The Honorable Jane P. Delbridge, Judge
The Honorable David S. Schell, Judge
Jennifer Flanagan, Clerk
Don Lucido, Director of Technical Assistance
Supreme Court of Virginia
LeAnn Lane, Court Analyst
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