



Auditor of Public Accounts
Mike Harmon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael Goins
Michael.Goins@ky.gov
502.564.5841
502.209.2867

Harmon Releases Audit of Breckinridge County Sheriff's Fee Account

FRANKFORT, Ky. – State Auditor Mike Harmon today released the audit of the 2017 financial statement of Breckinridge County Sheriff Todd Pate. State law requires the auditor to annually audit the accounts of each county sheriff. In compliance with this law, the auditor issues two sheriff's reports each year: one reporting on the audit of the sheriff's tax account, and the other reporting on the audit of the fee account used to operate the office.

Auditing standards require the auditor's letter to communicate whether the financial statement presents fairly the receipts, disbursements and excess fees of the Breckinridge County Sheriff in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The sheriff's financial statement did not follow this format. However, the sheriff's financial statement is fairly presented in conformity with the regulatory basis of accounting, which is an acceptable reporting methodology. This reporting methodology is followed for all 120 sheriff fee audits in Kentucky.

As part of the audit process, the auditor must comment on noncompliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grants. The auditor must also comment on material weaknesses involving the internal control over financial operations and reporting.

The audit contains the following comment:

The sheriff overspent his approved budget for calendar year 2017: During calendar year 2017, the sheriff expended \$35,686 more than the amount fixed by the fiscal court. The sheriff did not amend his budget for calendar year 2017. According to the bookkeeper, he was not aware that he needed to amend the line items that went over the budget at year-end. Failure to monitor the budget shows a lack of fiscal responsibility and places public funds at risk. The state local finance officer requires the fiscal court to approve a calendar year budget for each fee office as a component of the county's budget preparation process by January 15th of each year. KRS 68.210 states, "[t]he administration of the county uniform budget system shall be under the supervision of the state

local finance officer who may inspect and shall supervise the administration of accounts and financial operations and shall prescribe. . . a system of uniform accounts for all counties and county officials.” We recommend the sheriff ensure disbursements do not exceed his approved budget. The sheriff should monitor his budget throughout the year and request budget amendments sufficient to cover actual expenses as necessary.

Sheriff's Response: The original 2017 budget was completed by the previous Office Manager and her replacement did not realize an amended budget was allowable or required to be amended by total or by line item. Some line items were under budget and some were over because of reduction in some expenses and the need for additional uniforms due to the replacement of deputies. The overall budget was monitored closely since the Officer Manager started on July 1, 2017 for the remainder of the year to ensure funds were spent as needed for the efficient operation of the Sheriff's office. The 2018 budget will be amended prior to the end of the calendar year and presented to fiscal court for approval. There is no way to get the actual expenses equal to the amounts budgeted in each line item, but every effort will be made to ensure that it is close as possible and that the entire budget continues to be monitored.

The sheriff's responsibilities include collecting property taxes, providing law enforcement and performing services for the county fiscal court and courts of justice. The sheriff's office is funded through statutory commissions and fees collected in conjunction with these duties.

The audit report can be found on the [auditor's website](#).

###

The Auditor of Public Accounts ensures that public resources are protected, accurately valued, properly accounted for, and effectively employed to raise the quality of life of Kentuckians.

Call 1-800-KY-ALERT or visit our website to report suspected waste and abuse.

