



Auditor of Public Accounts
Mike Harmon

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

Harmon Releases Audit of Russell County Sheriff's Office

FRANKFORT, Ky. – State Auditor Mike Harmon today released the audit of the 2017 financial statement of Russell County Sheriff Clete McAninch. 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 Russell 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 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 internal control over financial operations and reporting.

The audit contains the following comment:

The sheriff did not comply with KRS 61.310(8) regarding donations: The Russell County Sheriff's Office failed to meet the minimum requirements of KRS 61.310(8). Instead of being deposited into the sheriff's 'Donation Account,' two donations were deposited into the 'Drug Account' and a portion of the donations were disbursed from there. Another donation was deposited and disbursed from the 'Fee Account.' In addition, the sheriff did not keep a register recording all donations.

The sheriff misunderstood the requirements of KRS 61.310. As a result, the sheriff's office comingled donation funds with drug forfeiture and fee monies collected. In addition, the sheriff did not have a register available for public inspection should any citizen have requested to inspect it.

KRS 61.310(8)(a) states, "[a] sheriff may accept a donation of money or goods to be used for the public purposes of his or her office if the sheriff establishes a register for recording all donations that includes, at a minimum:

1. The name and address of the donor;
2. A general description of the donation;
3. The date of acceptance of the donation;
4. The monetary amount of the donation, or its estimated worth; and
5. Any purpose for which the donation is given.

The register shall constitute a public record, be subject to the provisions of KRS 61.870 to 61.884, and be made available to the public for inspection in the sheriff's office during regular business hours."

We recommend the sheriff comply with KRS 61.310(8) by depositing all donations into an account separate from other funds received and maintaining a register that conforms to the requirements listed in the statute.

Sheriff's Response: The sheriff did not provide a response.

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](#).

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