



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 Breathitt County Clerk's Fee Account

FRANKFORT, Ky. – State Auditor Mike Harmon today released the audit of the 2022 financial statement of Breathitt County Clerk Becky Curtis. State law requires the auditor to conduct annual audits of county clerks and sheriffs.

Auditing standards require the auditor's letter to communicate whether the financial statement presents fairly the receipts, disbursements and excess fees of the Breathitt County Clerk in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The clerk's financial statement did not follow this format. However, the clerk'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 clerk 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 finding:

The Breathitt County Clerk's Office does not have adequate segregation of duties: This is a repeat finding and was included in the prior year audit report as Finding 2021-001. The Breathitt County Clerk's Office does not have adequate segregation of duties. One employee collected cash, prepared a daily checkout sheet, and compiled a total daily checkout sheet. Another employee prepared checks, prepared state reports, posted to the receipts and disbursements ledger, and prepared the quarterly report. The county clerk's office implemented compensating controls with documented review of the accounting procedures within their operations, but the controls were not effective enough to detect errors.

A lack of segregation of duties existed over the accounting and reporting functions of the county clerk's office because a limited number of employees were available to properly segregate these job duties. Although compensating controls were in place, they were not effective. This deficiency increases the risk of misappropriation of assets, errors, and inaccurate financial reporting. Adequate segregation of duties would prevent the same person from having a significant role in these incompatible functions. The county clerk implemented oversight with duties that cannot be segregated, yet control deficiencies were found. Good internal controls dictate that duties should be adequately segregated, or compensating controls implemented to ensure accurate financial reporting.

We recommend the county clerk segregate duties. If segregation of duties is not feasible due to a lack of staff, the county clerk should implement and document compensating controls that are strong enough to detect errors to offset this control deficiency.

County Clerk's Response: We will work to segregate duties whenever possible and hire additional staff when budget allows.

The county clerk's responsibilities include collecting certain taxes, issuing licenses, maintaining county records and providing other services. The clerk's office is funded through statutory 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.

