



## Auditor of Public Accounts Allison Ball

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Ball Releases Audit of Hancock County Sheriff's Fee Account**

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** – State Auditor Allison Ball released the audit of the 2023 financial statement of Hancock County Sheriff Ralph Dale Bozarth. 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 Hancock 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.

The audit contains the following finding:

**The Hancock County Sheriff's Office does not have adequate segregation of duties over receipts, disbursements, and bank reconciliations:** During calendar year 2023, the sheriff's office did not have adequate segregation of duties over receipts, disbursements, and bank reconciliations. The sheriff's bookkeeper collects payments from customers, prepares deposits, writes checks, posts transactions to the receipts ledger, posts checks to the disbursements ledger, and prepares monthly and quarterly reports. The sheriff or another employee did not document oversight of any of these activities.

We recommend the sheriff separate the duties over the receipt, disbursement, and reconciliation functions listed above. If this is not possible, due to a limited number of staff, then strong oversight over those areas should occur and involve the sheriff or an employee not currently performing any of those functions. The individual providing this oversight should initial source documents as evidence of this review.

*Sheriff's Response: Due to the limited number of employees we are unable to segregate the job duties.*

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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