



## Auditor of Public Accounts Allison Ball

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** – State Auditor Allison Ball released the audit of the 2023 financial statement of Former Letcher County Sheriff Mickey Stines. 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 Former Letcher 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 Former Letcher County Sheriff's Office did not have adequate segregation of duties:** The former sheriff's bookkeeper collected payments from customers and prepared receipts, prepared deposits, and posted receipts to the receipts ledger. In addition, the bookkeeper prepared disbursement checks, distributed payroll checks, posted checks to the disbursements ledger, and prepared the monthly bank reconciliations. The former sheriff stated they did not have enough funds to hire additional personnel to segregate duties.

We recommend the sheriff's office segregate duties within the office to adequately protect employees and prevent inaccurate financial reporting or misappropriation of assets. If this is not possible due to lack of funds, the sheriff's office should implement strong oversight over these areas, either by an employee independent of those functions or by the sheriff. Any oversight or reviews should be evidenced by the individual's signature or initials on the source documentation.

*Former Sheriff's Response: We do the best we can with the limited funds and take all precautions that we can.*

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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