



Auditor of Public Accounts
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Harmon Releases Audit of Meade County Clerk's Fee Account

FRANKFORT, Ky. – State Auditor Mike Harmon today released the audit of the 2021 financial statement of Meade County Clerk Judy R. Jordan. 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 Meade 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 comment:

The Meade County Clerk does not have segregation of duties over disbursements, payroll, and reconciliations: This is a repeat finding and was reported in the prior year audit report as Finding 2020-001. The Meade County Clerk's Office does not have segregation of duties over disbursements, payroll, and reconciliations. When invoices are received for operating expenses, the clerk or chief deputy will prepare the disbursement check in the financial software, which automatically posts to the ledger in the appropriate field. There was no documentation of review when an invoice is compared to the check, and checks do not require dual signatures, unless signed by an employee other than the county clerk. When reports are printed for required payments, the preparer or clerk will sign the report. There were initials of review on the reports when they were compared to the disbursement check. The county clerk prepares and signs payroll checks, but there

was no documentation of review when compared to the timecards. Payroll checks do not require dual signatures. The county clerk completes the bank reconciliation at the end of each month, but there was also no documentation of review. The county clerk did not receive the back of the cancelled checks from the bank in order to verify proper endorsement. The county clerk also prepares the quarterly report, signs, and submits it to the Department for Local Government (DLG). There was no documentation of review by another employee when compared to the receipt and disbursement ledger.

The county clerk does not have segregation of duties over disbursements, payroll, and reconciliations as part of internal controls for the office. Without proper segregation of duties, the risk of undetected material misstatement significantly increases due to errors and theft.

Strong internal controls and procedures are vital to ensure proper segregation of duties over collection, reporting, depositing, disbursing and reconciling receipts and disbursements. Additionally, proper segregation of duties protects employees in the normal course of performing their daily responsibilities. If duties are not segregated, effective compensating controls should be maintained and documented.

We recommend the county clerk segregate controls over disbursements, payroll, and reconciliations. If these duties cannot be segregated, then strong oversight should be provided to the employee responsible for these duties. Examples of compensating controls include, but are not limited to, invoices be reviewed and initialed when compared to the disbursement check, when payroll checks are issued, timecards should be reviewed and initialed by a different employee than who prepared the checks to verify accuracy. The bank reconciliation should be documented after review when compared to the bank balance and the county clerk should receive the backs of cancelled checks to verify endorsements. The quarterly reports can be compared to the receipts and disbursements ledger and documented after review by a different employee. All reviews should be evidenced and documented.

County Clerk's Response: The official did not provide a response.

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](#).

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