



Auditor of Public Accounts
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Harmon Releases Audit of Menifee County Sheriff's Fee Account

FRANKFORT, Ky. – State Auditor Mike Harmon today released the audit of the 2019 financial statement of Menifee County Sheriff Roger Smallwood. 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 Menifee 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 the internal control over financial operations and reporting.

The audit contains the following comment:

The sheriff's office does not have adequate segregation of duties: The sheriff's bookkeeper collected payments from customers, recorded transactions in the ledgers, prepared deposits, processed disbursements, and reconciled bank accounts.

According to the sheriff, this was caused by a limited budget which restricts the number of employees the sheriff could hire and delegate duties. Inadequate segregation of duties allows for one person to have a significant role in processing and recording receipts and disbursements, which increases the risk of undetected misappropriation of assets and inaccurate financial reporting.

Good internal controls dictate the same employee should not handle, record, and reconcile receipts. Further, the same employee should not be responsible for preparing, recording, and reconciling disbursements. The segregation of duties over various accounting functions such as opening mail, preparing deposits, recording receipts and disbursements, and preparing monthly reports, or the implementation of compensating controls is essential for providing protection from asset misappropriation and inaccurate financial reporting. Additionally, proper segregation of duties protects employees in the normal course of performing their daily responsibilities. If this is not feasible due to budgetary constraints, cross checking procedures could be implemented and documented by the individual performing the procedure.

We recommend the same person not perform multiple accounting functions and, if the duties cannot be segregated, then strong oversight over the employee's work should be implemented and documented.

Sheriff's Response: The office will try to segregate duties as much as possible with the current staff. We have limited budget and a low number of employees. The Sheriff will review and sign or initial paperwork daily.

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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