



COUNTY OF EL PASO
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

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06-03

June 4, 2020

The Honorable Ruben Lujan
Justice of the Peace, Precinct Number 6 Place 1
190 N. San Elizario Rd.
El Paso, Texas 79836

Dear Judge Lujan:

The County Auditor's Internal Audit division performed an audit of the Justice of the Peace, Precinct Number 6 Place 1 (JP6-1) to determine if internal controls are adequate to ensure proper preparation of JP6-1 financial reports. Policies, procedures, and regulations were also reviewed to ensure processes are documented, operating and efficient.

The audit report is attached. We tested two operational and three financial controls with a total of 30 samples. There were no findings noted as a result of the audit procedures. We wish to thank the management and staff of JP6-1 for their assistance and courtesies extended during this audit.

Because of certain statutory duties required of the County Auditor, this office is not independent in regard to your office, as defined by AICPA professional standards. However, our audit was performed with objectivity and due professional care.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward A. Dion".

Edward A. Dion
County Auditor

EAD:PT:ya

cc: Ms. Betsy Keller, Chief Administrator



**Justice of the Peace, Precinct Number 6 Place 1
August 2019 to March 2020
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

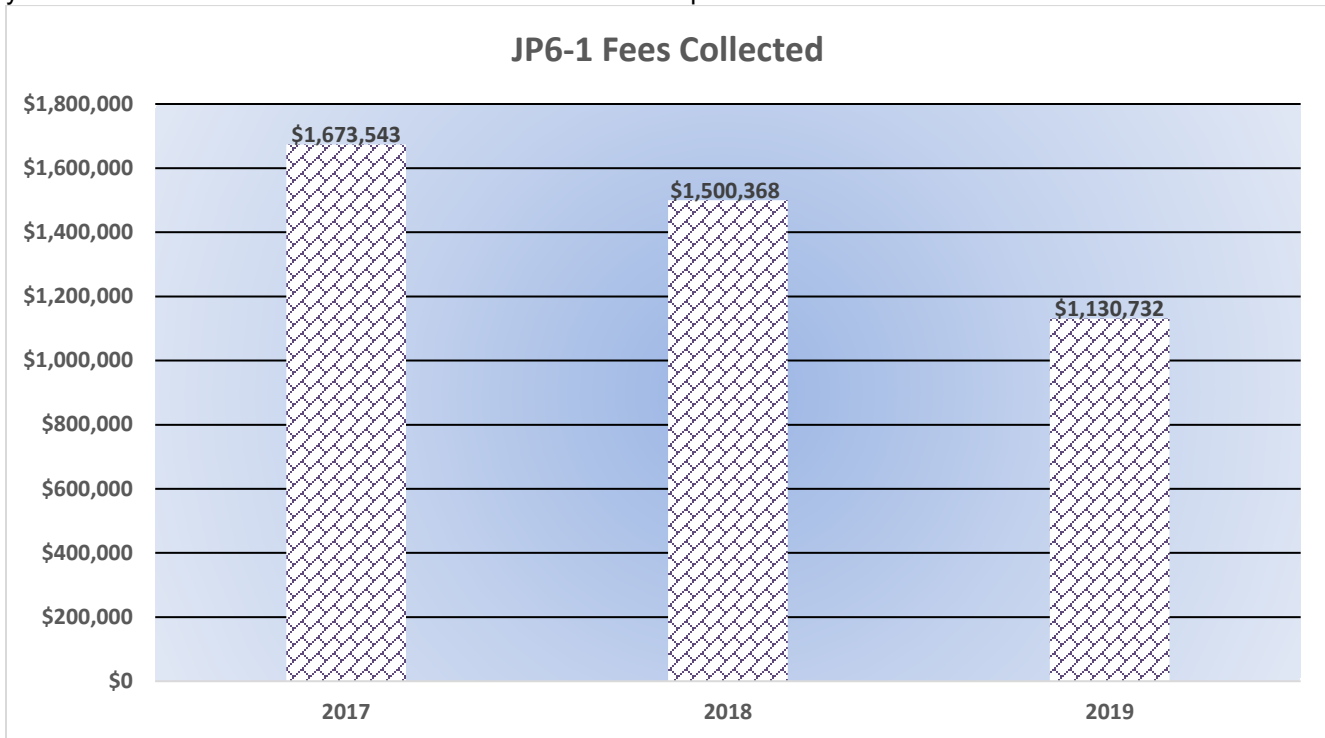


BACKGROUND

Justices of the Peace are elected officials and serve four year terms. Precinct 6 Place 1 (JP6-1) has judicial power over criminal cases involving minor offenses under their jurisdiction and civil matters where the amount in controversy does not exceed \$10,000. Other duties include issuing search and arrest warrants and the performance of marriage services. The current judge for JP6-1 has been in office since January 1, 2001. The audit was performed by Phillip Trevizo, internal auditor. The most recent prior audit report was issued on October 9, 2019.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

Financial reports are generated from the Odyssey Courts and Justice System (Odyssey) showing all transactions occurring each month. The following chart is a comparison of fees collected at JP6-1 for the past three fiscal years. The decrease in collections for 2019 is due to a drop in cases filed.



Source: El Paso County Funds and Fees of Office Reports

OBJECTIVES

The audit evaluated the adequacy of controls and processes to achieve key business objectives related to JP6-1 financial reports. Following are the business objectives and related controls assessments.

Business Objective	Control Assessment
1. Timely posting of Bond and Inmate Trust Section (BITS) payments	Satisfactory
2. Timely processing and resolution of cash bonds	Satisfactory
3. Completeness and timely posting of manual receipts issued	Satisfactory
4. Proper authorization of interpreter services invoices	Satisfactory
5. Completeness of the payment mail log and timely posting to Odyssey	Satisfactory

SCOPE

The scope of the audit is from August 2019 through March 2020. A scope limitation, due to the El Paso County Judge’s COVID-19 stay at home and office closure order effective March 24, 2020, should be noted. Statutorily required cash counts and other in-person functioning cash control reviews could not be performed. These will be addressed at a later time in order to ensure statutory compliance.



**Justice of the Peace, Precinct Number 6 Place 1
August 2019 to March 2020
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



METHODOLOGY

To achieve the audit objectives we:

- Reviewed cases with BITS payments for timely posting.
- Reviewed a sample of cash bonds posted to verify bonds were being addressed in a timely manner.
- Reviewed manual receipts for appropriate documentation and timely posting.
- Tested a sample of interpreter services invoices for proper authorization of payments.
- Tested a sample of mail log entries to determine completeness, accuracy, and timeliness (compliance with Local Government Code § 113.02)

RESULTS

Listed below are control and finding summaries, with findings listed from highest to lowest risk. Please see the *Findings and Action Plans* section of this report for the status of prior audit report findings.

Control Summary	
Good Controls	Weak Controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting of collections by Sheriff's Office (Obj. 1) • Review of pending cash bonds (Obj.2) • Manual receipt procedures (Obj. 3) • Review of interpreter services expenditures (Obj. 4) • Mail log controls (Obj. 5) 	
Findings Summary	
None	

INHERENT LIMITATIONS

This financial review was designed to provide reasonable assurance that the internal control structure is adequate to safeguard the County's assets from loss, theft, or misuse. The County's internal control structure is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that: (1) the cost of implementing the controls should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires the use of estimates and judgment by management. Because of the inherent limitations in any system of internal controls, errors or irregularities may occur and not be detected.

CONCLUSION

JP6-1 met all objectives for this audit. Internal controls are adequate to ensure proper preparation of the JP6-1 financial reports.



**Justice of the Peace, Precinct Number 6 Place 1
August 2019 to March 2020
Findings and Action Plans**



Prior Audit Findings Summarized with Current Status

Status

Closed (M)

1. **Finding:** 13% of cash bond cases sampled have not been addressed by the court.
Recommendation: JP6-1 staff should periodically review cash bonds to ensure cases are heard and a judgement is rendered in a timely manner.
Action Plan: Once made aware of the discrepancy, the cases were set up for a bond hearing. Outstanding Cash Bonds Reports from Odyssey will be reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure cash bond cases are being set up for bond hearings in a timely manner.