



COUNTY OF EL PASO
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

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11-36

November 13, 2023

The Honorable Norma Favela Barceleau
District Clerk
Room 103, County Courthouse Building
500 E. San Antonio Street
El Paso, Texas 79901

Dear Ms. Favela Barceleau:

The County Auditor's Internal Audit division performed an audit of the District Clerk's office financial records to determine if internal controls are adequate to ensure proper preparation of the District Clerk's financial reports. Policies, procedures and regulations were also reviewed to ensure processes are documented, operating and efficient.

The audit report is attached. We tested one operational and seven financial controls using 146 samples. There were no findings noted as a result of the audit procedures. We wish to thank the management and staff of District Clerk's office 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 blue ink that reads "Barbara Parker".

Barbara Parker
County Auditor

BP:PH:ya

cc: Ms. Betsy Keller, Chief Administrator



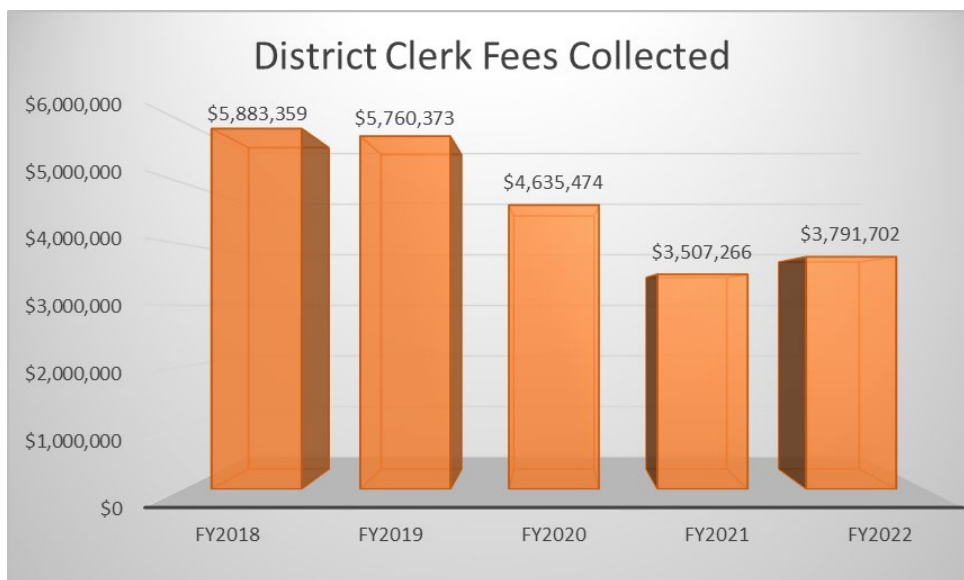
**THE OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT CLERK
SEPTEMBER 2022 – MAY 2023
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



BACKGROUND

The office of the District Clerk was created by the Texas Constitution, Article V, Section 9. The District Clerk is an elected official with a four-year term of office. The District Clerk’s office is responsible for coordinating the notification, swearing in and impaneling of jurors, securing court records, maintaining court dockets and collecting various fees. There are eight sections in the District Clerk’s Office: Accounting, Adoptions, Appeals, Attorney General, Civil, Criminal, Family Jury and Records Management. The District Clerk’s office provides service to the District Courts, County Courts, visiting judges and the jail magistrates. The current District Clerk has been in Office since 2011. The audit was performed by Patrice Hills, CIA, internal auditor certified. The most recent prior audit report was issued on January 1, 2023, no findings were noted.

Financial reports are generated from the Enterprise Justice System showing all transactions occurring each month. The following chart is a comparison of fees collected at the District Clerk’s office for the past five fiscal years. Fiscal year 2022 collections increased by \$284,436 or 8.11% due to District clerk fees.



Source: Enterprise Justice Judicial Reporting System

SCOPE

The scope of the audit is from September 2022 through May 2023.

OBJECTIVES

The audit evaluated the adequacy of controls and processes to achieve key business objectives related to the District Clerk’s office. Following are the business objectives and related control assessments.

Business Objective	Control Assessment
1. Established and documented policies and procedures.	Satisfactory
2. Functioning and appropriate cash controls.	Satisfactory
3. Timely deposits in accordance with <i>Local Government Code (LGC) § 113.022</i> .	Satisfactory
4. Timely and complete bank reconciliations.	Satisfactory
5. Completeness of the payment mail log and timely posting to Enterprise Justice.	Satisfactory
6. Adequate disbursement controls for funds held for minors.	Satisfactory
7. Adequate disbursement controls for juror payments and reimbursements from the State.	Satisfactory



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METHODOLOGY

To achieve the audit objectives, we:

- Reviewed policies and procedures.
- Performed a surprise cash count on August 9, 2023, in accordance with *LGC §115.0035*.
- Tested all deposits to verify compliance with *LGC §113.022*.
- Tested a sample of bank reconciliations for completeness, accuracy and management review.
- Tested a sample of mail log entries for appropriate documentation and compliance with *LGC §113.022*.
- Tested a sample of cases with funds held on behalf of minors for initial investments, disbursements controls and supporting documentation.
- Shadowed and interviewed staff regarding juror payment process and reviewed associated policies.
- Tested Comptroller’s Judiciary Section jury reimbursements for timeliness, supervisory approval and supporting documentation.

RESULTS

Listed below are controls and findings summaries, with findings listed from highest to lowest risk. There were no findings identified in this audit. The prior audit also had no findings.

Controls Summary	
Good Controls	Weak Controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policies and procedures (Obj. 1) • Functioning appropriate cash controls (Obj. 2) • Timely deposits of daily collections (Obj. 3) • Timely and accurate bank reconciliations (Obj. 4) • Mail payment log and timely posting to Enterprise Justice (Obj. 5) • Adequate disbursement controls for investments held on behalf of minors (Obj. 6) • Adequate disbursement controls for juror payments and reimbursements (Obj. 7) 	
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

The office of the District Clerk met all objectives of this audit. Internal controls are adequate to ensure proper preparation of the financial reports. Processes documented appear to be operating efficiently.