

**ATTESTATION REPORT
OF
LANCASTER COUNTY COURT**

JANUARY 1, 2019, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2019

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Issued on March 27, 2020

LANCASTER COUNTY COURT

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LANCASTER COUNTY COURT

COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

During our examination of the Lancaster County Court, we noted a certain deficiency and other operational matters that are presented here. The following comment is required to be reported in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and is considered to be a material weakness.

This comment and recommendation is intended to improve the internal control over financial reporting and operational efficiencies in the following area:

Segregation of Duties

Good internal control includes a plan of organization, procedures, and documentation designed to safeguard assets and provide reliable financial records. A system of internal control should include a proper segregation of duties, so no one individual is capable of handling all phases of a transaction from beginning to end.

We noted that the office of the County Court lacked a sufficient segregation of duties, as one person was capable of handling all aspects of processing transactions from beginning to end. A lack of segregation of duties increases the risk of possible errors or irregularities; however, due to a limited number of personnel, an adequate segregation of duties may not be possible without additional cost. Further, personnel are under the direction of both the Nebraska State Court Administrator and the Presiding Judge. We have noted this comment in previous examinations.

Additionally, we noted that access to signature stamps was not limited to the individual whose name was on the stamp.

We recommend the County Court and the Nebraska State Court Administrator review this situation. As always, the cost of hiring additional personnel versus the benefit of a proper segregation of duties must be weighed.

County Court's Response: Lancaster County Court does share the concern about segregation of duties. We will continue to work to implement procedures to ensure good internal control while still operating efficiently.

It should be noted this report is critical in nature as it contains only our comment and recommendation on the area noted for improvement and does not include our observations on any accounting strengths of the County Court.

Draft copies of this report were furnished to the County Court to provide management with an opportunity to review the report and to respond to the comment and recommendation included in this report. The formal response received has been incorporated into this report. The response has been objectively evaluated and recognized, as appropriate, in the report. A response that indicates corrective action has been taken was not verified at this time, but they will be verified in the next examination.



NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Charlie Janssen
State Auditor

Charlie.Janssen@nebraska.gov
PO Box 98917
State Capitol, Suite 2303
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509
402-471-2111, FAX 402-471-3301
auditors.nebraska.gov

LANCASTER COUNTY COURT

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

Lancaster County Court
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

We have examined the accompanying Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions of the Lancaster County Court as of and for the calendar year ending December 31, 2019. The County Court's management is responsible for the Schedule based on the accounting system and procedures set forth in Note 1. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Schedule based on our examination.

Our examination was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards applicable to attestation engagements contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we perform the examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Schedule is based on the accounting system and procedures set forth in Note 1, in all material respects. An examination involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions. The nature, timing, and extent of the procedures selected depend on our judgment, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the Schedule, whether due to fraud or error. We believe that the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions for the calendar year ending December 31, 2019, is based on the accounting system and procedures prescribed by the Nebraska Supreme Court, as set forth in Note 1, in all material respects.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we are required to report all deficiencies that are considered to be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control; fraud and noncompliance with provisions of laws or regulations that have a material effect on the Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions; and any other instances that warrant the attention of those charged with governance; noncompliance with provisions of contracts or grant agreements, and abuse that has a material effect on the subject matter or an assertion about the subject matter of the examination engagement. We are also required to obtain and report the views of management concerning the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as any planned corrective actions. We performed our examination to express an opinion on whether the Schedule is presented in accordance with the criteria described above and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the internal control over the Schedule or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions. Our examination disclosed a certain finding that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*, and that finding, along with the views of management, is described in the Comment Section of the report.

The purpose of this report is to express an opinion on the Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions, as described in paragraph one above. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose. This report is a matter of public record, and its distribution is not limited.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. J. Janssen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

March 26, 2020

Charlie Janssen
Auditor of Public Accounts
Lincoln, Nebraska

LANCASTER COUNTY COURT
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS
AGENCY FUNDS

For the Calendar Year Ended December 31, 2019

	Balance January 1, 2019	Additions	Deductions	Balance December 31, 2019
ASSETS				
Cash and Deposits	\$ 1,504,105	\$ 11,587,788	\$ 10,685,104	\$ 2,406,789
LIABILITIES				
Due to State Treasurer:				
Regular Fees	\$ 39,091	\$ 1,062,934	\$ 1,061,895	\$ 40,130
Law Enforcement Fees	4,748	114,226	114,323	4,651
State Judges Retirement Fund	23,481	566,955	566,565	23,871
Court Administrative Fees	24,872	638,210	636,700	26,382
Legal Services Fees	18,301	456,566	456,278	18,589
Due to County Treasurer:				
Regular Fines	44,265	1,138,245	1,140,347	42,163
Overload Fines	1,700	104,706	97,830	8,576
Regular Fees	8,482	289,853	282,753	15,582
Petty Cash Fund	950	-	-	950
Municipality Fines	66,832	1,761,703	1,765,832	62,703
Due to Municipalities:				
Regular Fees	3,318	97,216	96,228	4,306
Trust Fund Payable	1,268,065	5,357,174	4,466,353	2,158,886
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,504,105	\$ 11,587,788	\$ 10,685,104	\$ 2,406,789

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the schedule.

LANCASTER COUNTY COURT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL SCHEDULE
For the Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2019

1. Criteria

A. Reporting Entity

The Lancaster County Court is established by State statute and is administratively operated through the Court Administrator's Office of the Nebraska Supreme Court, which is part of the State of Nebraska reporting entity. The Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions of the County Court reflect only the Agency Funds activity of the County Court, including the receipts and their subsequent disbursement to the appropriate entities for which they were collected. The Schedule does not reflect the personal services expenses of the County Court, which are paid by the Nebraska Supreme Court, or the operating expenses, which are paid by Lancaster County.

B. Basis of Accounting

The accounting records of the County Court Agency Funds are maintained, and the Schedule of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions have been prepared, based on the accounting system and procedures prescribed by the Nebraska Supreme Court. Under this system of accounting, fines, fees, and receipts relating to trust funds are shown as additions to assets and as an increase in the related liability when received or collected. Likewise, disbursements are shown as deductions to assets and as a decrease in the related liability when a check is written.

2. Deposits and Investments

Funds held by the County Court are deposited and invested in accordance with rules issued by the Supreme Court, as directed by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 25-2713 (Reissue 2016). Funds are generally consolidated in an interest-bearing checking account; however, the County Court may order certain trust funds to be invested separately. Any deposits in excess of the amount insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation are required by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 77-2326.04 (Reissue 2018) to be secured either by a surety bond or as provided in the Public Funds Deposit Security Act.