

Hernando County Clerk of Circuit Court
Audit Services Department
Memorandum

TO: Jana Murphy, Court Services Director/In-house Legal Counsel
VIA: Karen Nicolai, CPA, Clerk of Circuit Court
FROM: Peggy Prentice, CIA, CISA, CFE, Audit Services Director
SUBJECT: Guardianship Annual Financial Reports
DATE: June 3, 2008

The Audit Services Department's Audit Projects Schedule included a review of the Clerk of Circuit Court's Court Services' desk audits of guardianship annual financial reports. This project is now complete. This memorandum contains the Audit Services Department's review comments.

The purpose of this memorandum is to furnish management independent, objective analyses, recommendations, counsel, and information concerning the activities reviewed. The audit report is a tool to help management discern and implement specific improvements. It is not an appraisal or rating of management.

DESK AUDIT COMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDER

In order to provide some level of assurance that guardianship financial reports were audited in compliance with Administrative Order H-2000-5, "Auditing Duties and Responsibilities of the Clerk of Circuit Court Regarding Guardianship Files" (the Order), the Auditors reviewed 20 desk audits performed during calendar year 2007. The scope of work was generally limited to the most recent annual reporting period or final reporting desk audit. Forms and administrative policies and procedures utilized by the Court Services Department to perform these desk audits were not addressed. In determining compliance with the Order, the Auditors relied upon documentation in the guardianship files. Based upon testing, there is reason to believe that the 20 desk audits reviewed were performed in compliance with the Order.

PETITION FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF GUARDIAN'S FEES AND EXPENDITURES

In order to provide some level of assurance that guardian reimbursable expenditures were not duplicated (double-dipped), the Auditors reviewed five (5) professional guardians' files with activity from January 1, 2007, to December 31, 2007, for hours expended for the benefit of the wards under their responsibility. The Auditors tested these guardians' time blocks documented on Petitions for Reimbursement of Guardian's Fees and Expenditures. The auditors documented the date and time of the hours claimed. The auditors looked for duplications. The Auditors did not identify any material duplication of reimbursed guardian expenditures.

ADMINISTRATION OF GUARDIANSHIP CASES

In order to provide some level of assurance that newly created guardianship cases (opened during 2007) were recorded and had activity, the Auditors reviewed the full population of guardianship cases identified in the FACTS database. The Auditors did not identify any guardianship cases that lacked what would be considered “normal” activity.

Although the ASD exercised due professional care in the performance of this review, this should not be construed to mean that unreported noncompliance or irregularities do not exist. The deterrence of fraud and/or employee abuse is the responsibility of management. Audit procedures alone, even when carried out with professional care, do not guarantee that fraud or abuse will be detected.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to Court Services personnel for the courteous treatment extended to the Auditors during this review. If you have any questions or concerns, or need additional information in regard to the above, please do not hesitate to contact me at (352)540-6235, or just stop by my office, Room 201.

copy: Board of County Commission:

David Hamilton, County Administrator

Larry Jennings, Deputy County Administrator

George Zoettlein, Office of Management and Budget Director

Jon Jouben, Assistant County Attorney

Clerk of Circuit Court:

Amy Gillis, CPA, Finance Director

Other:

Hernando Today

St. Petersburg Times – Hernando Edition

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