

Report on the

Office of Circuit and District Courts

Hale County, Alabama
July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021

Filed: January 7, 2022



Department of Examiners of Public Accounts

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Honorable Rachel Laurie Riddle
Chief Examiner of Public Accounts
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Dear Madam:

An examination was conducted on the Office of Circuit and District Courts, Hale County, Alabama, for the period July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021, by Examiners Stephanie Cave and Kala Williams. I, Stephanie Cave, served as Examiner-in-Charge on the engagement, and under the authority of the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 41-5A-19, I hereby swear to and submit this report to you on the results of the examination.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie C. Cave
Examiner of Public Accounts

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Financial Information



Department of
Examiners of Public Accounts

SUMMARY

**Office of Circuit and District Courts
Hale County, Alabama
July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021**

The Office of Circuit and District Courts, Hale County, Alabama, (hereinafter referred to as the “Courts”) receipts, disburses and otherwise accounts for court costs, fines, forfeitures, fiduciary funds and other miscellaneous receipts for cases under the Court’s jurisdiction. The amounts collected are then distributed to various state and local entities as ordered by the Courts and in accordance with state and local laws and regulations. The Circuit Clerk, an elected official, is responsible for overseeing the operations of the Circuit and District Courts. The duties of the Circuit Clerk and District Court Clerk are enumerated in the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Sections 12-17-93 and 12-17-94. The Circuit Clerk also serves as clerk for the District Court pursuant to the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 12-17-160.

Honorable Catrinna Perry served as Circuit and District Court Clerk during the examination period.

The Circuit and District Court Clerk maintains a special fund known as the Circuit Clerk’s Fund that was created pursuant to the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 12-17-225.4. The Circuit and District Court Clerk receives twenty-five percent (25%) of a thirty percent (30%) collection fee for any delinquent court ordered payments that are 90 days old and have been collected by the District Attorney. This twenty-five percent of the collection fee is deposited in the Circuit Clerk’s Fund and is used for general office operations.

The Circuit and District Clerk also maintains a special fund known as the Circuit Clerk’s Judicial Administration Fund that was created pursuant to the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Sections 12-19-310 and 12-19-311. The Circuit and District Court Clerk receives portions of the docket fee and bail bond fee increases provided for by these statutes. These funds are to be expended for the support of local court operations and to promote the efficient administration of justice.

This report presents the results of an examination of the Courts and a review of compliance by the Courts with applicable laws and regulations of the State of Alabama in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts under the authority of the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 41-5A-12.

Tests performed during the examination did not disclose any significant instances of noncompliance with applicable state or local laws and regulations.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The Official was invited to and attended an exit conference to discuss the results of this report. Representing the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts were: Shelley Patrenos, Audit Manager; Stephanie Cave, Examiner; and Kala Williams, Examiner.

***Summary of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances
July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021***

	Civil Division	Criminal Division	Total
Beginning Cash Balances - July 1, 2016	\$ 163,853.79	\$ 78,356.14	\$ 242,209.93
Receipts	<u>3,934,983.33</u>	<u>2,814,376.49</u>	<u>6,749,359.82</u>
Total Available for Disbursement	4,098,837.12	2,892,732.63	6,991,569.75
Disbursements	<u>2,197,646.00</u>	<u>2,822,512.62</u>	<u>5,020,158.62</u>
Ending Cash Balances - May 31, 2021	<u>\$ 1,901,191.12</u>	<u>\$ 70,220.01</u>	<u>\$ 1,971,411.13</u>

Fiduciary Funds on Hand
May 31, 2021

Civil Division	\$ 79,847.12
Total	<u>\$ 79,847.12</u>

Circuit Clerk's Fund
Summary of Receipts, Disbursements and Balance
July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021

Receipts

Restitution Recovery Fees	\$ 20,001.20
Clerk Solicitors Fees	35,402.99
Sex Offender Registration Fees	86.80
Copies	5,534.61
Pre-Trial Diversion Fees	1,014.44
Interest Earned	116.78
Miscellaneous	428.07
Total Receipts	<u>62,584.89</u>

Disbursements

Salaries	34,118.75
Travel Training	717.04
Office Expense	93.76
Dues	1,832.66
Miscellaneous	776.02
Total Disbursements	<u>37,538.23</u>

Excess of Receipts Over/(Under) Disbursements	25,046.66
Balance - July 1, 2016	<u>4,036.46</u>
Balance - May 31, 2021	<u>\$ 29,083.12</u>

***Circuit Clerk's Judicial Administration Fund
Summary of Receipts, Disbursements and Balance
July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2021***

Receipts

\$35 Bail Bond Fees	\$ 17,960.08
3.5% Bail Bond Fees	12,861.18
Criminal Docket Fees	37,601.40
Civil Docket Fees	10,847.62
Municipal Docket Fees	4,756.09
Covid Relief Funds	9,366.55
Interest Earned	1,462.55
Total Receipts	<u>94,855.47</u>

Disbursements

Salaries	34,708.28
Dues	1,800.00
COVID-Related Expenses	9,100.00
Other	3,078.92
Office Expense	204.48
Total Disbursements	<u>48,891.68</u>

Excess of Receipts Over/(Under) Disbursements	45,963.79
Balance - July 1, 2016	<u>63,285.02</u>
Balance - May 31, 2021	<u>\$ 109,248.81</u>