

*Internal Audit Report*

LCCC Court Intake Processing



**Report Number:** 2018.08  
**Date:** April 4, 2019



## LCCC Court Intake Processing



To: The Honorable Linda Doggett, Lee County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

From: Tim Parks, Chief Internal Audit Officer/Inspector General

Date: April 4, 2019

Re: Audit of LCCC Court Intake Processing

Dear Ms. Doggett,

The Inspector General Department has completed an audit of LCCC Court Intake Processing. Chris Stanisci, CPA, Internal Auditor conducted this review.

This audit activity conforms to the Institute of Internal Auditor's (IIA) *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Red Book)* and the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General (Green Book)*.

The audit client's response is attached to this report. We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance provided us by management and staff during this review.

This report will be posted to the Clerk of Courts website, [www.leeclerk.org](http://www.leeclerk.org), under Inspector General Audit Reports. A link to this report has been sent to the appropriate parties.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Parks".

Tim Parks, Chief Internal Audit Officer/Inspector General  
Inspector General Department

TJP/GK



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# LCCC Court Intake Processing



## Executive Summary

The audit of the Lee County Clerk of Courts (LCCC) Court Intake Processing was included in the 2018 LCCC Annual Audit Plan. A risk assessment project was completed for all LCCC business units prior to creating the audit plan.

A meeting was held with management to discuss the audit objective and scope and to solicit information regarding risks.

The objective of the LCCC Court Intake Processing audit was to:

- Assess the Court Department's ability to measure and monitor its internal objectives and its contribution to the overall mission of the LCCC
- Determine if controls related to intake processing of warrants and dispositions for misdemeanor and felony criminal cases are in place to ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, laws, and regulations

Our conclusion is that the Courts Department has met its overall objectives in the intake processing of warrants and dispositions. Recommendations were offered to management to add value and enhance the Department's functions.

We believe that enhancements can be made in terms of:

- Implementing a training checklist for dispositions; ensuring signatures of the training specialist on all training checklists
- Implementing post-intake review procedures of comparing court minutes with Odyssey to ensure agreement

## Background

The Courts Department is responsible for timeliness and accuracy of the court intake processing, including information entry in the Clerk's Odyssey case management system.

In 2016 the Courts Department went through significant organizational changes that had impact on the court intake process. Processing clerks review information from court minutes for felony and misdemeanor criminal cases and manually input the data into Odyssey. For warrants, the processing clerks obtain the information from the court minutes, input the data into Odyssey, and then alert the Lee County Sheriff's office that the warrant is ready to be served. Processing clerks not only review the court minutes, but they also verify judge's signatures, charges, defendant's description and dates. If any of this information is incorrect, the clerks follow the applicable correction procedures to have the errors corrected.



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Disposition procedures are more complex than procedures for warrants. For dispositions, all information from court minutes must be input into Odyssey. Such information includes monetary fees and fines, orders for probation, jail time, etc. Clerks enter the results of hearings into Odyssey by adding all necessary components, provisions, and comments to the case. For felony cases that include incarceration, sentence and judgement packets are completed, printed, and submitted to the Judges for their review and signature. Processing clerks question the court clerk when they find a discrepancy on a minute's sheet. When data is found to be illegible or incorrect, the clerk sends the noted discrepancy through a corrections process prior to finalizing the disposition.

## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

The objective of the LCCC Court Intake Processing audit was to:

- Assess the Court Department's ability to measure and monitor its internal objectives and its contribution to the overall mission of the LCCC
- Determine if controls related to intake processing of warrants and dispositions for misdemeanor and felony criminal cases are in place to ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, laws, and regulations

The audit scope focused on the Department's operational activities including:

- Intake processing of warrants for misdemeanor and felony criminal cases.
- Intake processing of dispositions for misdemeanor and felony criminal cases.

The audit methodology was comprised of four steps:

- Preliminary Risk Assessment: A meeting was held with management to discuss the audit objective and scope and to solicit information regarding risks
- Planning: Audit procedures were developed based upon research, audit objective, scope, and the preliminary meeting
- Field Work: Managers and employees were interviewed for insights on the operations. Evaluations and tests were conducted on operations and procedures to address and complete the audit fieldwork
- Wrap-up: An Exit Conference was held with management to discuss the audit results

## Observations and Recommendations

### *Training Checklists*

We noted that the Courts Department developed training checklists that were required to be completed and signed by employees in training and their training specialist. The checklists



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indicated the training start and completion dates. For warrants, the completed checklists generally did not include the signature of the Training Specialist. For dispositions, the Courts Department had developed some in-house procedures, but had not developed a training checklist.

### Recommendation

We recommend that the Courts Department implement a training checklist for dispositions and ensure that all checklists completed for both warrants and dispositions be signed by both the employee and training specialist.

### *Post Intake Review Process*

During the testing of warrants and dispositions, we noted for 4 of 20 (20 percent) of the dispositions tested, court minutes for the cases were not in agreement with information in Odyssey. For example, the court minutes showed a 364 day sentence and Odyssey reflected 361 days. Further, we noted that there were not any post intake procedures to include a review comparing court minutes with Odyssey to ensure agreement.

### Recommendation

We recommend that the Courts Department implement procedures to include spot check comparisons of information obtained from court minutes with Odyssey to ensure accuracy of the system input.

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**COURT'S AUDIT RESPONSE**

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**TO:** TIM PARKS, CHIEF INTERNAL AUDIT OFFICER / INSPECTOR GENERAL  
**FROM:** KATIE FOX  
**SUBJECT:** AUDIT OF COURT INTAKE PROCESSING  
**DATE:** MARCH 28, 2019  
**CC:** KEVIN KARNES, CHIEF OFFICER OF COURTS

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Mr. Parks,

The Courts Department appreciates the opportunity to review the recommendations made and we have taken steps to implement the solutions to ensure our office practices & procedures are in compliance. Please see our response below to each recommendation.

- We recommend that the Courts Department implement a training checklist for dispositions and ensure that all checklists completed for both warrants and dispositions be signed by both the employee and training specialist.
  - Courts Response: Courts Department is in agreement with the recommendation, therefore the Intake Manager has created the checklist and a copy of which is incorporated to this response.
  - Compliance Date: Checklist will be used effective for the next employee being trained on these processes.
  
- We recommend that the Courts Department implement procedures to include spot check comparisons of information obtained from court minutes with Odyssey to ensure accuracy of the system input.
  - Courts Response: Courts Department is in agreement with the recommendation; therefore the Intake Manager facilitated the creation of an audit report with the assistance of Court Operations. Efforts are underway to determine report recurrence and assign an employee to monitor the output.
  - Compliance Date: May 1, 2019

Thank you,



Katie Fox, CPM  
Courts Manager  
Lee County Clerk of Courts  
Phone: 239.533.2535