



COMPTROLLER'S INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Knox County Governmental Library

December 21, 2023

Jason E. Mumpower
Comptroller of the Treasury



DIVISION OF INVESTIGATIONS



JASON E. MUMPOWER
Comptroller

December 21, 2023

Knox County Board of Commissioners
400 Main Street
Knoxville, TN 37902

Knox County Officials:

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury conducted an investigation of selected records of the Knox County Governmental Library, and the results are presented herein.

Copies of this report are being forwarded to Governor Bill Lee, the State Attorney General, the District Attorney General of the 6th Judicial District, certain state legislators, and various other interested parties. A copy of the report is available for public inspection in our Office and may be viewed at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jason E. Mumpower", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jason E. Mumpower
Comptroller of the Treasury

JEM/MLC

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Knox County Governmental Library

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury investigated allegations of malfeasance related to the Knox County Governmental Library. The investigation was initiated after Knox County officials reported questionable employee compensation to a library employee. The investigation was limited to selected records for the period January 2014 through February 2023. The results of the investigation were communicated with the Office of the District Attorney General of the 6th Judicial District.

BACKGROUND



The Knox County Governmental Library (library) was established by Private Acts of 1955 to assist the courts, judges, and public officials in Knox County (county). The library is located near the Criminal, Circuit, and Chancery Courts in Knoxville. Prior to October 2022, the Knox County Governmental Library Commission (commission) governed the library and was comprised of each judge of the Circuit, Chancery, Criminal, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts, and the Judge of the County Court of Knox County. In October 2022, the commission was replaced

by the county commission's personnel committee to govern library operations.

The purpose of the commission and personnel committee, relating to library governance during the period, was to 1) establish, acquire, and operate a governmental library in the county, including a place to house the library; 2) employ a librarian; 3) provide for the levying, collecting, and disbursing of a county library tax and dues to defray the cost and expenses of the library; and 4) enact reasonable rules and regulations covering the operation and use of the library. The library is housed in a secure office that primarily requires assigned identification badge access to enter and exit the building and parking lot during the period reviewed. The county maintains activity logs detailing when and where employees use their identification badges.


Ashley Satterfield was hired as the librarian on October 6, 2014. She was a non-exempt hourly employee who according to county officials did not have authorization to work remotely. Satterfield resigned from her position on January 27, 2023, after county officials met with her about being absent from the library during her required work hours.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

1. SATTERFIELD RECEIVED COMPENSATION FOR TIME NOT WORKED TOTALING AT LEAST \$108,444

Satterfield knowingly received compensation for time not worked totaling at least \$108,444. Investigators reviewed Satterfield’s identification badge records (**Refer to Exhibit 1**) and other payroll documentation from October 2014 through January 2023. After conducting interviews and reviewing documentation, investigators determined that Satterfield did not complete timesheets to account for time worked, did not document any annual or sick leave taken, and was regularly paid for time she was absent from work. Investigators question Satterfield’s numerous workday records with no library identification badge entry/exit activity and lack of any work-related functions or other work-created documentation performed either at the library or in a remote work location. Satterfield admitted to investigators that she did not perform work on the days in question but still received compensation. The failure to promptly detect this unearned compensation was the result of a lack of internal controls and proper management oversight.

Exhibit 1

What	Where	Who	When	Card No.
Granted Access [17794L5 ENTRANCE (GATE 7)		SATTERFIELD, ASHLEY	07/18/2022 10:34AM	
Granted Access [17794L5 WEST GARAGE LOBBY DOOR		SATTERFIELD, ASHLEY	07/18/2022 10:38AM	
Granted Access [17794M99A C/R IN/OUT		SATTERFIELD, ASHLEY	07/18/2022 10:47AM	
Granted Access [17794L4 EXIT (GATE 5)		SATTERFIELD, ASHLEY	07/18/2022 11:37AM	
Total Number of Records: 4		*** End of Report ***		

Although Satterfield received the full month’s pay for work in July 2022, her badge entry/exit records show she was only physically present at the library on July 18, 2022, for approximately one hour.

Summary of Satterfield’s Unearned Compensation

Year	Compensation
2014	\$173
2015	\$6,403
2016	\$10,687
2017	\$13,052
2018	\$15,369
2019	\$17,600
2020	\$10,570
2021	\$17,047
2022	\$16,713
2023	\$830
Total	* \$108,444

* *Investigators adjusted this total for leave likely earned by Satterfield during the period.*

2. SATTERFIELD RECEIVED OTHER QUESTIONABLE COMPENSATION TOTALING AT LEAST \$40,527

Satterfield received other questionable compensation totaling at least \$40,527. Investigators reviewed selected employee identification badge records and other payroll documentation for October 2014 through January 2023. After conducting interviews and reviewing payroll documentation, investigators determined Satterfield did not complete timesheets to account for her time worked and officials failed to maintain records to indicate that she accrued and used sick or annual leave. Although officials noted Satterfield had no authorization to work remotely, Satterfield claimed she worked from home periodically, specifically on days her identification badge entry/exit records show she was physically present at the library for less than a full workday. Therefore, investigators could not determine whether Satterfield earned the total compensation paid on days she was physically present at the library for less than a full workday. The following table summarizes Satterfield’s additional questionable compensation by year:

Summary of Satterfield’s Other Questionable Compensation

Year	Compensation
2014	\$1,093
2015	\$6,243
2016	\$4,976
2017	\$4,386
2018	\$4,398
2019	\$3,652
2020	\$4,272
2021	\$4,921
2022	\$5,871
2023	\$715
Total	<u>\$40,527</u>

On December 14, 2023, the Knox County Grand Jury indicted Ashley Satterfield for one count of Official Misconduct and one count of Theft over \$60,000.

The charges and allegations contained in the indictment are merely accusations of criminal conduct, and not evidence. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt and convicted through due process of law.

[Knox County Governmental Library Investigative Exhibit](#)

INTERNAL CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE DEFICIENCIES

Our investigation revealed deficiencies in internal controls and compliance, some of which contributed to Satterfield's ability to receive compensation for time not worked without prompt detection:

Deficiency 1: The commission and county failed to properly manage and oversee Satterfield's work

The commission and county failed to properly manage and oversee Satterfield's work responsibilities, work hours, and attendance. This lack of management and oversight allowed Satterfield to be paid for time not worked and other questionable time. According to the *Knox County Handbook*, non-exempt employees must complete an accurate timesheet of beginning and ending work times, including lunch. However, the commission and county did not require Satterfield to complete and submit timesheets during the period reviewed. Investigators also determined that Satterfield had no record of leave accrued or used during the period. The commission's and county's failure to manage and oversee Satterfield's daily work and to require timesheets directly resulted in Satterfield's misappropriation and receipt of additional questionable compensation.

Deficiency 2: The commission and county failed to require prenumbered receipts for all library collections

The commission and county failed to require consecutively prenumbered receipts for all library collections. Due to the lack of consecutively prenumbered receipts, investigators could not determine if all funds were accounted for and deposited by the county. Issuing prenumbered receipts for all collections reduces the risk of funds being misused or misappropriated.

Deficiency 3: The commission and county failed to ensure the collection of library fees

The commission and county failed to ensure the collection of library fees. The library charges fees ranging from \$5.00 for one-day individual use access to \$375.00 for large firms' annual access. Investigator interviews and review of library records revealed that most fees were not collected and/or solicited since approximately 2020.

Knox County officials indicated that they have corrected or intend to correct these deficiencies.