



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

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Former Jackson County Clerk Took Public Funds for Personal Use

A new audit released today on Jackson County details how the county clerk admitted to taking public money for her own personal use.

During the course of a routine audit of the county's books, auditors discovered that more than \$10,000 in collections hadn't been deposited in the bank. Five days later, the county's records indicated that the money had been deposited in the bank.

The clerk, Mary Jo Matthews, told auditors she had occasionally taken money for her personal use, but always replaced the funds. Matthews was indicted by the Jackson County Grand Jury in August and resigned from her job as clerk earlier this month.

The audit also uncovered numerous other problems in other county offices with bookkeeping and money-handling procedures, including delayed bank deposits, backdated purchase orders, incomplete leave records and unbudgeted expenses.

The audit, which was conducted by the Comptroller's Division of Local Government Audit, can be found online at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/la/>.

"Obviously, it is very disappointing when someone in a position of public trust uses that position for personal gain," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "It's also very disappointing that Jackson County had so many other issues, some of which have been discussed in audits from previous years. Jackson County should work with its newly-established audit committee to correct the internal control and noncompliance deficiencies noted in the audit report."

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