

Summit County Domestic Relations Court Performance Audit – General Report

Prepared for:

**The Honorable Judge John P. Quinn
Audit Committee**

**Approved by Audit Committee
June 19, 2017**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Total Number of Issues –14

Policies and Procedures

Section	# Issues	Issue Descriptions	Page Ref.
Policies and Procedures	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of review within the last two (2) years; manuals not formally approved; incorrect references to legislation. • Insufficient policies in several areas. 	7

Internal Controls

Strong Internal Controls:

Testing Section	# Issues	Issue Description	Page Ref.
Purchasing	0	N/A	10
Fringe Benefits			13

Weaknesses in Internal Controls:

Testing Section	# Issues	Issue Descriptions	Page Ref.
Revenue	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untimely deposits. • Revenue reconciliation form not approved. 	9
Expenditures	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior year purchase orders used in the current year; funds not properly encumbered. • Packaging slips not retained to ensure proper segregation of duties. 	10
Asset Inventory	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset listing not maintained. 	11
Personnel Files	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel files appear incomplete. 	12
Payroll	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper approval of payroll. 	12
Regulatory Compliance	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Administrative, Individual, and Assigned Judge Reports not submitted timely. 	13
Guardian Ad Litem	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrepancy in amount of initial training hours in policy manual. 	14
Indigent Defense	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support not retained to document the attorney attending/viewing the training seminar; attorney’s letter requesting to be added to the appointed counsel list could not be located. • Application for appointed counsel fees not submitted timely; attorney did not file a motion for extraordinary fees or judgement entry. 	15
Professional Qualifications	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for mediator required training could not be located. 	16

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GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Summit County Domestic Relations Court (DR Court) has exclusive jurisdiction over divorce, dissolution or annulment proceedings. The control of the Court continues until all the children born to the parties have reached age eighteen (18) and no longer regularly attend high school. In addition, the Court has the power to enforce orders, even after the end of the marriage.

In Summit County, the DR Court also has jurisdiction over all matters involving custody, visitation and support of minor children, unless they are wards of another court (i.e. Juvenile Court Dependency/Neglect/Abuse cases). The Court also shares, with the Municipal Court and the Common Pleas Court, jurisdiction over domestic violence cases.

The Court has three (3) educational programs designed to help parents assist their children during the court process and beyond.

Remember the Children

The Remember the Children Program is a free, parent education program designed to increase parent's awareness of their children's reactions and emotional and developmental needs during and after divorce. All parents with children under eighteen are required to attend the program within sixty (60) days of filing a divorce proceeding.

Working Together

The Working Together Program is an educational program for never married parents or grandparents seeking visitation, who share a commitment to their children, and are involved in the Court process to determine visitation and/or custody issues. Working Together gives parents the opportunity to learn together their legal rights and responsibilities as parents. Following the education program, parents are given the opportunity to meet for mediation with a neutral professional to resolve their differences and plan together on the best way to meet the challenges ahead.

Positive Solutions

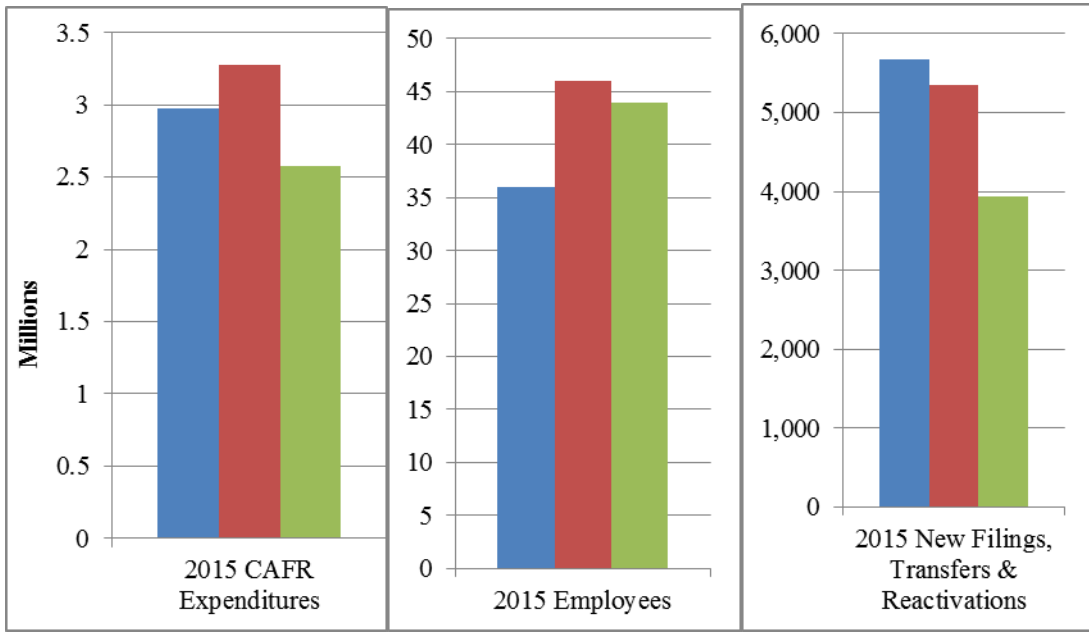
The Positive Solutions Program is an educational program for parents involved in the court who are experiencing high levels of ongoing conflict. In an effort to reduce the level of conflict and encourage cooperative co-parenting, the DR Court orders parents to attend the three, 3-hour classes in order to learn conflict management and communication skills. The program is appropriate for all pre and post decree divorce, dissolution and parentage cases. Parents may be referred by the Judge, the magistrate or upon the request of counsel, at any time during the case process.

The DR Court consists of thirty-six (36) employees (1% of Summit County employment) comprising of Judges, Magistrates, Court Administrator, Court Reporters, Bailiffs and support staff. The DR Court's 2014 and 2015 actual expenditures totalled \$2,829,918 and \$2,973,057, respectively (3% of the 2014 and 2015 actual general fund expenditures, respectively).¹

IAD compared the DR Court's 2015 actual Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) expenditures, staffing levels, 2015 new case filings, transfers and reactivations, 2015 case terminations and 2015 case clearance rates from comparably populated counties – Montgomery and Lucas. The comparisons are represented in the graphs on the following page:

¹ <https://fiscaloffice.summitoh.net/index.php/documents-a-forms/viewcategory/8-comprehensive-annual-financial-reports>

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AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The primary focus of this review was to provide the DR Court with reasonable assurance, based on the testing performed, on the adequacy of the system of management control currently in effect for the audit areas.

Management controls include the processes for planning, organizing, directing, and controlling program operations, including systems for measuring, reporting, and monitoring performance. Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective controls that, in general, include the plan of organization, as well as methods and procedures to ensure that goals are met. Specific audit objectives include evaluating the policies, procedures, and internal controls related to the DR Court.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Based on the results of our review, we prepared specific issues and recommendations for improvement that were discussed with management. These recommendations, as well as management's unaltered written response, can be found in the following sections of this report.

Objectives:

- To obtain and review the current policies and procedures.
- To review the internal control structure through employee interviews and observations.
- To perform a general overview of the physical environment and security of the facilities, data, records and departmental personnel.

Scope:

An overview and evaluation of the existing policies, processes, procedures, contracts and internal control structure utilized by the DR Court from November 1, 2015 through October 31, 2016.

The following were the major audit steps performed:

OBJECTIVE 1 – POLICY AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

1. Obtain and review the current policies and procedures.
2. Meet with the appropriate personnel to obtain an understanding of the current department processes and procedures. Compare those existing processes to the policies and procedures manual for consistency, noting all exceptions.
3. Obtain and review the document retention policy and determine if policies and procedures are currently in place and being followed.
4. Test procedures for mandatory compliance where applicable.
5. Identify audit issues and make recommendations where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE 2 – REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

1. Meet with the appropriate personnel to obtain an understanding of the control environment.
2. Document the existing control procedures in narratives and/or flowcharts.
3. Compare existing processes to the policies and procedures manual for consistency.

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4. Test procedures for compliance where applicable, noting all exceptions.
5. Investigate discrepancies and summarize results.
6. Make recommendations where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE 3 – REVIEW OF SECURITY (covered in a separate report in compliance with ORC §149.433).

1. Perform a general overview of the physical environment and security of the department/agency being audited.
2. Interview various personnel to determine that confidential information is secure and processed only by appropriate parties.
3. Test security issues where appropriate.
4. Analyze current policies and make recommendations.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Interviews:

To gain an understanding of the DR Court, IAD performed interviews with the following positions:

- Court Administrator
- Assistant Court Administrator
- Chief Magistrate
- Magistrate
- Community Outreach Director
- Court Security Director
- Family Court Service Director
- Family Court Services Evaluator

Any issues noted are addressed in the respective sections of this report.

I. Policy and Procedures Review:

Policies and procedures were reviewed for each applicable testing section within the audit for accuracy and completeness and compared to current processes for consistency. The Ohio Rules of Superintendence were reviewed for records retention and compared to processes throughout the audit to ensure that the schedule contained all relevant documents.

The following issues were noted:

1. Issue:

Upon review of policy and procedure manuals for completeness and accuracy, IAD noted the following:

- DR Court Policy and Procedures Manual
 - The manual has not been updated/revised within the last two (2) years.
 - The manual has not been formally approved by management.
 - The manual includes incorrect references to legislation.
- DR Court Personnel Manual
 - The manual has not been updated/revised within the last two (2) years.
 - The manual has not been formally approved by management.

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Recommendation:

IAD recommends that all policies and procedures be updated/reviewed and approved by management and include correct references to legislation. This will help ensure that approved policies and procedures are accurate and consistently followed by employees.

Management Action Plan:

The Court will review both manuals and update any sections needed. Once those updates are complete, we will formally approve by management and obtain employee sign-offs on the updated versions. We anticipate this to be completed by December 31, 2017.

2. Issue:

Upon review of policies and procedures, IAD noted insufficient/outdated policies and procedures in the following areas:

- Cash collection (shortages/overages, receiving payments in the mail), receipting, depositing, and reconciling processes.
- Purchasing policy (needs updated to reflect current procedures).
- Performance evaluations (contradicting policies).
- Requiring an HR or Management employee to be present when an individual is reviewing an employee file.
- Guardian Ad Litem appointment procedure/process (e.g., 24 hour notice, cougar automatic case distribution, etc.).
- Asset inventory (tracking/tagging of assets).
- Attorney appointment procedure/process.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that Policy and Procedures are created/updated, approved, and disseminated for all functional areas within the agency. This will help to ensure that proper procedures are in place and consistently followed within the department.

Management Action Plan:

As part of the review and update process in Item 1 above, the Court will reconcile any conflicting policies and add policies not currently in existence per the above recommendations. We anticipate this to be completed by December 31, 2017.

II. Internal Control Testing:

Risk-based internal control testing and/or observations were performed in the following areas:

- Revenue
- Purchasing
- Expenditures
- Asset Inventory
- Personnel Files
- Payroll
- Regulatory Compliance

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- Fringe Benefits
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Indigent Defense
- Professional Qualifications

REVENUE

Policies and procedures and applicable ORC sections were reviewed, an observation was performed, staff interviews were conducted and a flowchart was created and approved to gain an understanding of the cash receipts cycle, the laws and regulations that govern it, and internal controls in place. A sample of cash receipts and deposits received from the Remember the Children program was judgmentally selected for detail testing to ensure daily reconciliation form was complete and properly approved and the funds were deposited timely in accordance with ORC §9.38.

A sample of attendance sheets for the Remember the Children program was randomly selected and detail testing was performed to ensure the program participant paid the program fee or had a case filed with the court.

The following issues were noted:

3. **Issue:**

Upon detail testing of cash receipts, IAD noted twelve (12) of twelve (12), or 100%, instances where funds were not timely deposited, in accordance with ORC §9.38.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends all funds received be deposited by the next business day or a policy be written to allow up to three (3) days for daily deposits totaling less than \$1,000. This will help to ensure compliance with ORC §9.38.

Management Action Plan:

The court is implementing a procedure to ensure deposits are made within three days. While a formal policy will be included in the Policy and Procedures Manual updates identified in items 1 and 2 above, effective April 1, 2017, all deposits will be made within three days.

4. **Issue:**

Upon detail testing of cash receipts, IAD noted ten (10) of twelve (12), or 83%, instances where the Court Administrator or Deputy Court Administrator did not approve the revenue reconciliation form, per discussion with the Court Administrator.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends the Court Administrator or Deputy Court Administrator approve all reconciliation forms. This will help to ensure management oversight of cash collections is properly documented.

Management Action Plan:

The court is implementing a procedure to ensure reconciliation forms are reviewed and approved within two business days of the cash collection. While a formal policy will be included in the Policy and Procedures Manual updates identified in items 1 and 2 above, effective April 1, 2017, the procedure is being implemented.

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PURCHASING

Policies and procedures were reviewed, interviews were conducted and a flowchart was created and approved to gain an understanding of the purchasing process. Samples of purchase order requisitions, purchase orders and purchase order change orders were judgmentally selected and detail testing was performed to test for proper documentation and approvals. Additionally, IAD reviewed all purchases made with the Staples credit card to ensure the purchases appeared reasonable.

The following general recommendation was noted:

General Recommendation:

Upon discussion with personnel, IAD noted one (1) employee with the ability to enter and approve requisitions (encumbrance of funds). Additionally, upon detail testing, IAD noted thirteen (13) of fourteen (14), or 93%, instances where the requisition was entered and approved by the same employee. IAD recommends that requisition entry and supervisory approval be assigned to separate employees. Additionally, IAD recommends that DR Court designate backup employees so that no one person is responsible for both functions. This will help to ensure proper segregation of duties and approval over the requisition process.

No issues were noted.

EXPENDITURES

Policies and procedures and applicable ORC sections were reviewed, staff interviews were conducted and a flowchart was created and approved to gain an understanding of the expenditure cycle, the laws and regulations that govern it, and internal controls in place. A sample of expenditures was randomly selected and detail expenditure testing was performed to verify that funds do not remain encumbered for prior year purchase orders, confirm proper approval, proper authorizations, funds were encumbered prior to incurring the expense, and that the appropriate vendor and amount were paid.

A Banner transaction report listing all expenditures paid out of the computerization fund was obtained and detail testing was performed to ensure compliance with ORC §2301.031.

The following issues were noted:

5. **Issue:**

Upon detail testing of Banner expenditures, IAD noted the following:

- Three (3) of seven (7), or 43%, instances where a prior year purchase order was used for payment.
- Four (4) of six (6), or 67%, instances where funds were not properly encumbered prior to incurring the expense (e.g., purchase order date after the invoice date).

Per ORC §5705.41, no order involving the expenditure of money shall be made without a certificate of the Fiscal Office (purchase order); in addition, purchase orders may not extend beyond the end of the fiscal year.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that funds be encumbered prior to incurring the expense/liability and invoices be paid off current year purchase orders, with the exception of those associated with a current contract. This will help to ensure proper expenditure of funds, and compliance with ORC §5705.41.

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Management Action Plan:

The court will discharge prior year purchase orders when required by the fiscal office. Whenever practical, a purchase order will be requested prior to incurring the expense. There are circumstances where the vendor submits an invoice for services for the upcoming year. While we consider this invoice to be a quote rather than an invoice, we will endeavor to have a quote in advance in order to encumber funds prior to the actual invoice being submitted. This policy is effective May 1, 2017.

6. Issue:

Upon discussion with personnel, IAD noted no employee designated to receive purchases. This creates the potential for the same employee to order and receive items, causing an improper segregation of duties. In addition, IAD noted packing slips are not maintained.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends an employee be assigned to receive all purchases, separate from the employee responsible for ordering. Additionally, IAD recommends packing slips be maintained in order to provide documentation receipt and review of the order. This will help to ensure a proper segregation of duties.

Management Action Plan:

Effective March 23, 2017, a specific employee, and a backup employee have been designated to receive purchase orders and review packing slips for incoming shipments. These employees are separate from those placing the orders.

ASSET INVENTORY

Policies and procedures were reviewed and an interview was conducted to gain an understanding of the asset and IT inventory processes and internal controls in place.

The following issue was noted:

7. Issue

Upon discussion with personnel, IAD noted the DR Court does not tag/track assets; therefore, detail testing could not be performed to ensure proper asset tracking.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that DR Court implement a process and begin tagging/tracking assets. This will help to ensure accountability and safeguarding of Court assets.

Management Action Plan:

Effective April 1, 2017, the Court will begin tagging and tracking newly acquired assets in excess of \$1,500. A formal policy for this process will be included in our updated Policy and Procedures Manual referenced in earlier items.

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PERSONNEL FILES

Policies and procedures were reviewed and an interview was conducted to gain an understanding of the personnel files process. A sample of personnel files was selected and detail testing was performed to ensure completeness of records.

Employee job descriptions were reviewed and detail testing was performed to ensure DR Court employees maintain the required licenses/certifications.

The following issue was noted:

8. Issue:

Upon detail testing of personnel files, IAD noted eight (8) of eight (8), or 100%, files which appeared to be incomplete per the Personnel File Checklist (e.g., missing exempt employee form, performance evaluations, IT-4, etc.).

Recommendation:

IAD recommends employee personnel files be reviewed and updated to ensure files contain the relevant documents. Additionally, IAD recommends performance evaluations be conducted and documented annually for all employees. This will help to ensure completeness and accuracy of personnel files.

Management Action Plan:

A detailed review will be conducted on all active employee files to ensure all required items are included. Any missing items will be obtained. We anticipate this process to be complete no later than June 30, 2017.

PAYROLL

An interview was conducted to gain an understanding of the payroll process. A payroll approval report was generated and reviewed to determine appropriate authorizations and to confirm a proper segregation of duties.

The following general recommendation and issue were noted:

General Recommendation:

Upon discussion with personnel and detail testing, IAD noted paper time sheets are completed by the employee and approved by their supervisor. This data is then manually entered into Kronos, increasing the likelihood of error. IAD recommends the DR Court begin to utilize the Kronos time keeping system. This will help to improve efficiency and reduce the potential for error.

9. Issue

Upon discussion with personnel and detail testing, IAD noted the Deputy Director enters payroll into Kronos but does not formally approve the process in the system; therefore, IAD could not performed detail testing to ensure proper segregation of duties.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that the Deputy Director formally approve payroll in Kronos. This will help to document the approval process in Kronos and support segregation of duties.

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Management Action Plan:

Effective March 23, 2017, the Deputy Court Administrator, in addition to keying payroll will formally approve the payroll in the Kronos system.

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Rules of Superintendence were reviewed, attributes were developed and detail testing was performed to ensure the DR Court submitted the Administrative Judge, Individual Judge and Assigned Judge reports to the Supreme Court, no later than the fifteenth day after the close of the reporting period (Rule of Superintendence 37).

The following issue was noted:

10. Issue:

Upon detail testing of statistical reports, IAD noted four (4) of four (4), or 100%, instances where the monthly Administrative, Individual, and Assigned Judge Reports were not submitted by the fifteenth day after the close of the reporting period, in accordance with Rule 37 of the Rules of Superintendence.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that monthly Administrative, Individual, and Assigned Judge Reports be submitted by the fifteenth day after the close of the reporting period. This will help ensure compliance with Rule 37 of the Rules of Superintendence.

Management Action Plan:

The court obtains case management data from our “Cougar” case management system. The system has case data input largely by Clerk of Courts staff. Until late 2015, we were not even able to generate accurate Supreme Court reports due to defects in the system. At the end of each month, substantial review, correction and data cleanup is needed to review case data for accuracy and to make corrections in the system. We have prioritized having accurate information on these reports. While an effort will be made to submit reports by the fifteenth of the following month, data cleanup and case management of over-age cases may take longer than that time period. We have consulted with the Supreme Court case management section and they have expressed no concerns over the submission of our reports.

Furthermore, the Cougar system, while tracking visiting judge cases separately, and generating separate Assigned Judge Reports, does not provide visiting judge information in the format needed to indicate visiting judge involvement on the regular reports for our two judges which are submitted to the Supreme Court. The visiting judge information would need to be populated on the “V” column on the report. Populating this field on the report would require substantial reprogramming the Cougar system at an unknown cost. We have consulted with the Supreme Court case management section staff with respect to this issue and they have indicated this information for visiting judges is not statistically significant for their purposes. We will consult with the county Office of Information Technology with respect to this issue. However, due to the fact that visiting judge information is not significant to the Supreme Court, this court is not willing to expend any funds to modify the Cougar system for this issue.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Detail testing of the following areas was performed, if applicable, to confirm that the DR Court is properly processing fringe benefits in accordance with IRS tax code:

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- Travel and meals reimbursement
- Cash incentives, awards, gift awards and/or bonuses
- County paid life insurance policies over \$50,000
- Uniforms and clothing allowances
- Employment contracts
- Agency vehicle usage
- Allowances for firearms or tasers and/or any other non-lethal weapon
- Tuition assistance and reimbursement
- Subcontracted employees
- Domestic Partnership health insurance benefits

No issues were noted.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM

Rules of Superintendence, Local Rules and Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) policies and procedures were reviewed, attributes were developed, and detail testing was performed to ensure the following:

- A public list was maintained of approved GALs.
- The court developed a process or local rule and appointed a person for accepting and considering written comments and complaints regarding the performance of GALs practicing before the court.
- The appointments of GALs will be recommended by the Family Court Services on a rotating basis and review of case distribution shall be conducted annually.

A sample of GALs was selected and detail testing was performed to ensure compliance with the following:

- A formal application and interview process was conducted.
- Court obtained a valid driver's license and current liability insurance.
- A Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) criminal background check was completed.
- Completed three (3) reference forms.
- Completed six (6) hours of initial GAL training through the Supreme Court of Ohio.
- Possess an advanced degree in law, social work, counseling or other related field.
- Completed six (6) hours of Summit County DR Court training annually.
- Received an annual evaluation.
- An annual update form was sent to the GAL and included all applicable information.
- GAL annually certified they are unaware of any circumstances that would disqualify them from serving.

A sample of GAL cases was selected and detail testing was performed to ensure compliance with the following:

Rules of Superintendence Rule 48

- An Order of Appointment was created and includes all required statements.
- If the GAL was paid, an itemized record of time spent and services rendered was submitted to the Court.
- A written final report was created and includes all appropriate documentation.
- The final report was filed with the Court no less than seven (7) days before the final hearing.

Local Rule 34

- Fees were charged to the plaintiff and defendant in accordance with Local Rule 34.06.

The following issue was noted:

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11. Issue:

Upon review of the Local Rules and Rules of Superintendence, IAD noted the following discrepancy:

- Rule 48 (E) (4) of the Rules of Superintendence requires six (6) hours of initial Guardian ad Litem training; however, Local Rule 34.02 requires eight (8) hours of initial training.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends that Local Rule 34.02 be revised to meet Rule 48 of the Rules of Superintendence. This will help to ensure consistency and adherence of the Local Rules to the Rules of Superintendence.

Management Action Plan:

The local rule will be reviewed and amended by December 31, 2017.

INDIGENT DEFENSE

Local Rules were reviewed, interviews were conducted, attributes were developed and detail testing was performed to ensure the following:

Local Rule 13.07

- Counsel attended/viewed the court's training seminar and provided a letter to the court requesting to be added to the list and set forth their qualifications for representing litigants in the court.
- Cases appear to be equitably distributed among the appointments.

Local Rule 13.08 (A-C)

- Counsel submitted an application for appointed counsel fees to the assigned judge no later than thirty (30) days after the issuance of a final appealable order on the contempt matter.
- Compensation is \$40 per hour for out-of-court services and \$50 per hour for in-court services rendered and the compensation amount is properly supported (e.g., timesheets).
- If compensation exceeds \$300, ensure the appointed attorney filed a motion for extraordinary fees, the fees are properly supported and the attorney provided a proposed judgement entry to the court.
- The judge approved all appointed counsel compensation.

The following issues were noted:

12. Issue:

Upon detail testing of the Appointed Counsel requirements, IAD noted the following:

- Six (6) of six (6), or 100%, instances where IAD could not confirm the attorney attended/viewed the court training seminar, in accordance with Local Rule 13.07(A).
- Two (2) of six (6), or 33%, instances where the Attorney's letter requesting to be added to the appointed counsel list could not be found, in accordance with Local Rule 13.07(B).

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Recommendation:

IAD recommends DR Court maintain documentation supporting attorneys' attendance to training seminars and request to be added to the appointed counsel listing. This will help to ensure compliance with Local Rule 13.07(A) and (B).

Management Action Plan:

The court will revise its process for appointed counsel. The new process will require that appointed attorneys provide proof to the court of compliance with Supreme Court CLE requirements. Details will be spelled out in the Policy and Procedures Manual updates as well as an amended local rule. We anticipate these changes to be completed by December 31, 2017.

13. Issue:

Upon detail testing of appointed counsel payments, IAD noted the following:

- Four (4) of sixteen (16), or 25%, instances where the application for appointed counsel fees was not submitted within thirty (30) days after the issuance of a final appealable order, in accordance with Local Rule 13.08 (C); and fees were not reduced.
- Two (2) of five (5), or 40%, instances where the attorney did not file a motion for extraordinary fees nor did the attorney provide a proposed judgment entry, in accordance with Local Rule 13.08 (B); and extraordinary fees were paid.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends DR Court ensure attorneys submit their application for appointed counsel fees within the thirty (30) day deadline. For instances where applications are not submitted timely, consideration be made to reduce fees. In addition, IAD recommends the DR Court ensure a motion is filed by the attorney and a judgment entry for extraordinary fees is provided prior to approving the compensation for extraordinary fees. This will help to ensure the timely submission of appointed counsel fees to the state and compliance with Local Rule 13.08 (A) & (B).

Management Action Plan:

The court will review all appointed counsel fee applications to either reduce requested fees to the maximum permitted or ensure that a Motion and Order for Extraordinary fees is filed before fees over the maximum are granted. This process will be effective on April 1, 2017.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Local Rule 33.07 was reviewed, interviews were conducted, attributes were developed, and detail testing was performed to ensure the following:

- A bachelor's degree or equivalent was obtained.
- At least two (2) years professional experience with families or equivalent experience that is satisfactory to the court was obtained.
- At least twelve (12) hours of basic mediation training or equivalent experience was obtained.
- At least forty (40) hours of specialized family of divorce mediation was obtained.
- At least fourteen (14) hours of specialized training in domestic abuse and mediation was obtained.
- If the fourteen (14) hours were not obtained, the mediator co-mediate with a mediator that has completed the fourteen (14) hours of specialized training.

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The following issue was noted:

14. Issue:

Upon detail testing of required qualifications for mediators, IAD noted one (1) out of six (6), or 17%, instances where IAD could not confirm that a mediator obtained the required fourteen (14) hours of specialized training in Domestic Abuse and Mediation, in accordance with Local Rule 33.07.

Recommendation:

IAD recommends the DR Court develop a mediator training requirement checklist and include the checklist in the mediator file to ensure all required documentation is obtained prior to the mediator being assigned cases. This will help to ensure compliance with Local Rules.

Management Action Plan:

The court will review all mediator files to ensure appropriate credentials are included in the file. We anticipate this to be complete by November 30, 2017.

II. Security:

Security issues noted during fieldwork are addressed under separate cover in the accompanying report in compliance with ORC §149.433.