



COMMISSIONERS COURT
COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE NUMBER CO#136903

PAGE 1 OF 4

DATE: 11/23/2021

SUBJECT: **RECEIVE AND FILE THE AUDITOR'S REPORT OF JURY SERVICES**

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED:

It is requested that the Commissioners Court receive and file the Auditor's Report of Jury Services.

BACKGROUND:

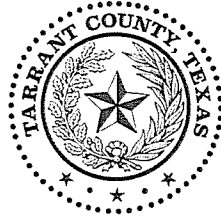
In accordance with Local Government Code, the Auditor's Office performed an audit of Jury Services. The objective of the audit was to determine whether controls were adequate to reasonably ensure that payments made to jurors were authorized, accurate, and properly paid during the seven (7) month period ended April 30, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with this item.

SUBMITTED BY: Auditor's Office

PREPARED BY: S. Renee Tidwell
APPROVED BY:



TARRANT COUNTY
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November 3, 2021

Ms. Paula Giaimo-Morales, Jury Bailiff
Honorable District Judges
Honorable Commissioners Court
Tarrant County, Texas

Re: Auditor's Report – Jury Services

SUMMARY

In accordance with Local Government Code, the Auditor's Office performed an audit of Jury Services. The objective of the audit was to determine whether controls were adequate to reasonably ensure that payments made to jurors were authorized, accurate, and properly paid during the seven-month period ended April 30, 2021.

As reported in October 2014, significant weaknesses continue to exist over the process and the Jury Management System (JMS). While some procedures have improved, it is still possible that inaccurate payments could be made to jurors and may not be detected. Tyler Technologies plans to update JMS, however it is unknown when this update will occur. We recommend that the JMS update include additional reporting capabilities that would allow Jury Services management to review all manual changes.

We also communicated less significant matters to staff during our review. Attached is management's written response to this report.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Texas Government Code, a person who reports for jury service is entitled to receive reimbursement for travel and expenses for amounts not less than \$6 for the first day of service and \$40 for any additional days. The State of Texas reimburses Tarrant County \$34 a day for the amounts paid to a person who reports for jury service in response to a summons for each day or fraction of each day *after* the first day of attendance.

Most other entities that use JMS pay jurors on a delayed basis through the accounting or treasurer's offices. However, Jury Services issues checks to jurors upon dismissal. JMS, developed by Courthouse Technologies, was designed to provide Tarrant County with the greatest flexibility for same-day payments without increasing existing staff. Through acquisition, Tyler Technologies currently maintains JMS

There was a tremendous decrease in the volume of juror payments since the courts were closed for an extended time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The chart below summarizes this impact.

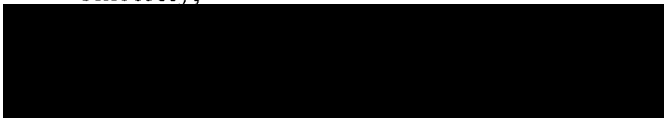
	PETIT JUROR PAYMENTS		GRAND JUROR PAYMENTS	
	<i>No. of Checks</i>	<i>Total Paid</i>	<i>No. of Checks</i>	<i>Total Paid</i>
FY2019	27,014	\$473,166	859	\$82,880
FY2020	21,441	\$333,182	772	\$72,240
FY2021	432	\$10,392	835	\$72,922

Note: Each fiscal year is for the seven months period ending April 30. The number of checks also includes donations.

CLOSING REMARKS

We appreciate the cooperation of Jury Services staff during our review. Please call me if you have any questions regarding the contents of this report.

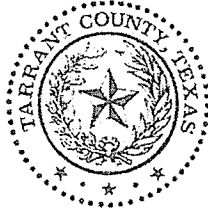
Sincerely,



S. Rénee Tidwell, CPA
County Auditor

Attachment: Management's response

Audit Team: Kim Trussell, Audit Manager
Kara Hoekstra, Senior Internal Auditor



TARRANT COUNTY JURY SERVICES

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November 8, 2021

Mrs. S. Renee Tidwell, CPA, County Auditor
Honorable District Judges
Honorable Commissioner Court
Tarrant County, Texas

Re: Response to Auditor's Report – Jury Services

Mrs. Tidwell,

I have received and reviewed the Auditor's Report for Jury Services. I do agree with their recommendation for JMS to include additional reporting capabilities. Currently, we do not have a designated report to show such changes. However, the application does record any manual entries into the juror's history record as shown in the example below.

Date	Description	Pool ID	Case Name	User ID	Notes
Nov 4, 2021 12:25	Credit/Debit Adjustment	0001210805		paula	Edit for Nov 1, 2021
Nov 4, 2021 12:24	Panel Attendance	0001210805	CCC4 08/16/21	paula	11/01,11/02

Tyler does not have a release date for the new Jury Management Software. As of July 2021, they were still in beta testing. I will contact Information Technology group to see if I can request this type of report be added to our jury management folder.

Thank you,


Paula G. Morales