COMPLIANCE AUDIT

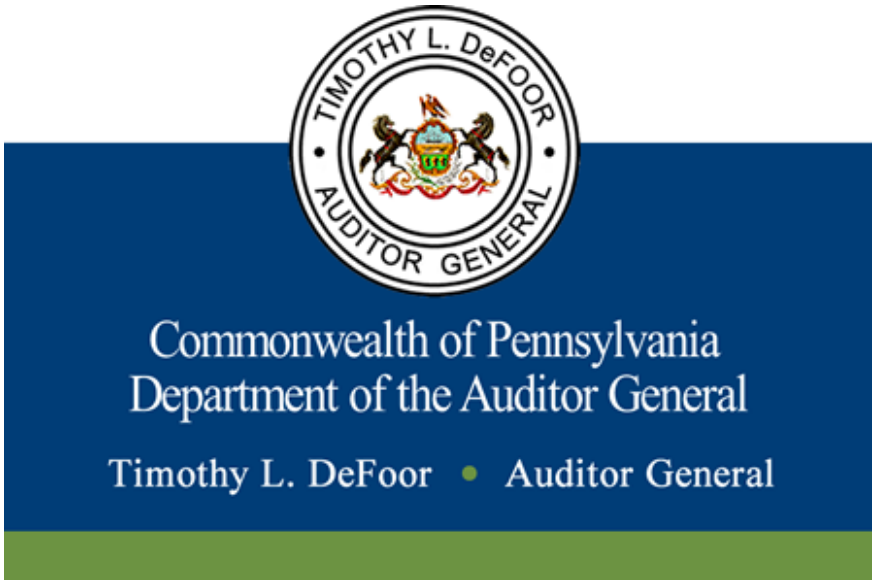
Department of Court Records
Wills and Orphans Division

Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023

August 2026



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL

The Honorable Pat Browne
Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Revenue
Harrisburg, PA 17128

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Department of Court Records, Wills and Orphans Division, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (Office), for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023, pursuant to the requirements of Sections 401(b) and 401(d) of *The Fiscal Code*, 72 P.S. § 401(b) and § 401(d).[1]

The objective of the audit was to determine whether all moneys collected on behalf of the Commonwealth have been correctly assessed, reported, and promptly remitted and to provide a report to the Department of Revenue to allow the Department of Revenue to state and settle the Office's accounts. Our audit was limited to areas related to the objective identified above and was not conducted, nor was it required to be, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The Office is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance of compliance with state laws and regulations applicable to the collection of moneys on behalf of the Commonwealth, including whether they have been correctly assessed, reported, and promptly remitted. The Office is also responsible for complying with those laws and regulations. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

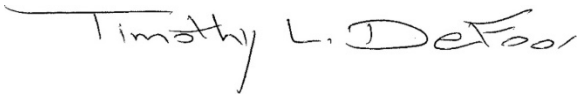
Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023, the Office, in all significant respects, complied with state laws and regulations applicable to the collection of moneys on behalf of the Commonwealth, including whether they have been correctly assessed, reported, and promptly remitted.

[1] The duties of this division are typically handled by offices called the Register of Wills and Clerk of the Orphans' Court in most Pennsylvania counties.

This report includes summaries of the Office's receipts and disbursements of funds collected on behalf of the Commonwealth (summaries). We obtained data representing the Office's receipts and disbursements from the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, which obtains data from each of the Commonwealth's register of wills, and clerk of orphans' court offices, and used the data to create the summary in the format required by the Department of Revenue. We also evaluated the accuracy of the data as part of our audit to conclude on the Office's compliance with certain state laws and regulations as described in the previous paragraph. Any adjustments that we considered necessary based on our audit work are disclosed in the *Proposed Audit Adjustments* line of the summaries; however, the scope of our audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of the amounts reported in the summaries.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether all moneys collected on behalf of the Commonwealth have been correctly assessed, reported, and promptly remitted. This report is not suitable for any other purposes.

The contents of this report were discussed with the Office's management. We appreciate the courtesy extended to us by the Office during the course of our audit. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Bureau of County Audits at 717-787-1363.



Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
August 13, 2026

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DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
WILLS AND ORPHANS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BACKGROUND
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

The Department of Auditor General is mandated by Article IV, Section 401(b) and (d) of *The Fiscal Code (*Act of April 9, 1929, P.L.343, No. 176), to audit the accounts of each county officer to determine whether all moneys collected on behalf of the Commonwealth have been correctly assessed, reported, and promptly remitted.

Register of Wills receipts consist of moneys collected on behalf of the Commonwealth. These include moneys collected for the following taxes and fees:

- Inheritance Taxes.

- Judicial Computer System/Access To Justice Fees are imposed on all petitions for grant of letters, and first filings in petitions concerning adoptions, incompetents' estates, minors' estates, and inter vivos trusts.

  For the purpose of reporting the collection of Judicial Computer System/Access To Justice Fees to the Department of Revenue, the office combined the Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphans' Court collections and reported them on the Clerk of Orphans' Court's monthly report. Therefore, the amount reported on the Clerk of Orphans' Court's statement of receipts and disbursements includes the fees collected for the office of the Register of Wills.

Clerk Of Orphans' Court receipts consist of monies collected on behalf of the Commonwealth. These include monies collected for the following taxes, surcharges, and fees:

- Marriage License Tax of $.50 on all marriage licenses filed with the Clerk of Orphans' Court.

- Marriage License Application Surcharge of $10 imposed on all marriage license applications.

- The Marriage License Declaration Fees of $13 imposed for the issuance of a marriage license or declaration of which the Commonwealth's portion is $10.

- Judicial Computer System/Access To Justice Fees are imposed on all petitions for grant of letters, and first filings in petitions concerning adoptions, incompetents' estates, minors' estates, and inter vivos trusts.

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
WILLS AND ORPHANS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BACKGROUND
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

Commissions

Acting in the capacity of an agent for the Commonwealth, the county office is paid a commission for collection of Inheritance Taxes. Effective January 1, 1988, the commission rate is 4.25 percent of $1.00 to $200,000.00 collected; 1.75 percent of $200,000.01 to $1,000,000.00 collected; and .5 percent of all collections in excess of $1,000,000.00.

Total disbursements for the audit period are as follows:

Register Of Wills

Inheritance Taxes

Deposits into the Department of Revenue's cash management account	$ 842,205,970
Credits issued by the Department of Revenue	1,908,051
Total	$ 844,114,021

The Register of Wills participates in the Department of Revenue's cash management system for Inheritance Taxes. Under this system, the "Agent" deposits Inheritance Tax collections to a local account approved and established in the name of the Department of Revenue, thereby eliminating the need for the agent to issue a check to disburse these taxes. This balance reflects a summary of monthly transmittal reports provided by the Department of Revenue. The balance does not reflect adjustments disclosed by our audit.

This balance does not reflect commissions of $4,307,025 for Inheritance Taxes that were paid to the County by the Department of Revenue which are not reflected in the Summary of Receipts and Disbursements.

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
WILLS AND ORPHANS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BACKGROUND
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

Clerk Of Orphans' Court

Clerk of Orphans' Court checks issued to:

Department of Revenue	$ 1,666,880

This balance reflects a summary of monthly transmittal reports provided by the Department of Revenue. The balance does not reflect adjustments disclosed by our audit.

Michael McGeever served as Director of the Department of Court Records, Wills and Orphans Division during the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023.

The summaries of receipts and disbursements provide a summary of receipts and disbursements by category. The categories and the amounts of taxes, fees, and surcharges assessed are based on Pennsylvania laws and regulations.

The summaries were prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue. Under this method, only the Commonwealth portion of cash receipts and disbursements are presented, revenues are recognized when received, and expenditures are recognized when paid.

Proposed Audit Adjustment – Register of Wills

The $950 proposed audit adjustment represents unpaid commissions owed to the county by the Department of Revenue during the audit period.

Proposed Audit Adjustment – Clerk of Orphans' Court – ($528)

The ($528) proposed audit adjustment is comprised of the following:

- $5 for a payment made by the office in February 2020 to settle the balance due from the previous audit.

- ($533) for the overpayment of 26 marriage licenses to the Department of Revenue during the audit period.

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
WILLS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

Receipts:	
Inheritance Taxes	$ 844,114,021
Disbursements and credits to Commonwealth	(844,114,021)
Balance due Commonwealth (County) per Department of Revenue data	-
Proposed Audit Adjustments	(950)
Adjusted balance due Commonwealth (County) for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023	$ (950)

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
ORPHANS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

Receipts:		
Marriage License Taxes	$	16,181
Marriage License Application Surcharges		323,610
Marriage License Declaration Fees		323,610
Judicial Computer System/Access To Justice Fees		1,003,474
Total Receipts		1,666,875
Disbursements to Commonwealth		(1,666,880)
Balance due Commonwealth (County) per Department of Revenue data		(5)
Proposed Audit Adjustments		(528)
Adjusted balance due Commonwealth (County) for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023	$	(533)

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS
WILLS AND ORPHANS DIVISION
ALLEGHENY COUNTY
REPORT DISTRIBUTION
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

This report was initially distributed to:

The Honorable Pat Browne
Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Revenue

The Honorable Andrea Tuominen
Court Administrator of Pennsylvania
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania
Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts

Michael McGeever
Director
Department of Court Records
Wills and Orphans Division

Ms. Amy Weise Clements
Acting Controller

The Honorable Sara Innamorato
County Executive

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.