




COUNTY OF LEHIGH  
OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

LEHIGH COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
17 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET  
ALLENTOWN, PA 18101-2400  
(610) 782-3082 FAX: (610) 820-3335

**TO:** Final Report Distribution  
**FROM:** Thomas Slonaker, County Controller   
**DATE:** June 11, 2008  
**RE:** Audit of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07

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We have completed a financial audit of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07, County of Lehigh, Pennsylvania for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007. Our audit report number 08-33 is attached.

The results of our audit are:

- The County of Lehigh received the proper amounts due from Magisterial District Court #31-1-07.
- The magisterial district judge is in general compliance with the applicable financial AOPC guidelines.
- Void receipts are not always approved by magisterial district court management.
- Clerical errors on the Server 1099 report.

Attachment

**COUNTY OF LEHIGH, PENNSYLVANIA**  
**MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURT #31-1-07**

*Financial Audit*  
*For the Period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007*

REPORT NO. 08-33

COUNTY OF LEHIGH, PENNSYLVANIA  
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURT #31-1-07

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Magisterial District Judge Robert C. Halal  
Magisterial District Court #31-1-07  
3350 MacArthur Road  
Whitehall, PA 18052

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and the Changes in Cash Balance for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007 of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07 as listed in the Table of Contents. The financial statements are the responsibility of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and the Changes in Cash Balance based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As discussed in Note 1, the financial statements were prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles.

Also, as discussed in Note 1, the financial statements present only the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07 financial activity and does not purport to, and does not, present fairly the assets, liabilities, and results of operations of the County of Lehigh for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007 in conformity with the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting.

In our opinion, the Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and Changes in Cash Balance referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial activity arising from cash transactions of the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07 for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007, on the basis of accounting described in Note 1. However, we noted control deficiencies or other management issues that are described in the accompanying "*Schedule of Audit Findings and Recommendations*".

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued a report dated June 5, 2008 on our consideration of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and should be considered in assessing the results of our audit.

THOMAS SLONAKER,  
County Controller

June 5, 2008  
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Final Distribution:

Auditor General of Pennsylvania  
Board of Commissioners  
Borough of Coplay  
Donald T. Cunningham, Jr., County Executive  
Brian L. Kahler, Fiscal Officer  
The Honorable William H. Platt, President Judge  
H. Gordon Roberts, Magisterial District Judge Administrator  
Kathy Sauter, AOPC  
Whitehall Township

COUNTY OF LEHIGH, PENNSYLVANIA  
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURT #31-1-07

*Statement of Receipts and Disbursements  
and Changes in Cash Balance  
for the Period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007  
(NOTE 1)*

	<u>1/1/06 to 12/31/06</u>	<u>1/1/07 to 10/31/07</u>
Receipts:		
Office Receipt Activity	\$ 826,087	\$ 730,697
Bank Account Interest	266	206
	-----	-----
Total Receipts .....	826,353	730,903
	-----	-----
Disbursements:		
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Costs and Fines	396,122	343,551
County of Lehigh – Costs and Fines	157,120	147,282
Whitehall Township – Fines	126,285	120,186
Other (NOTE 2)	122,105	92,282
Borough of Coplay – Fines	10,955	11,371
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – Interest	266	206
	-----	-----
Total Disbursements .....	812,853	714,878
	-----	-----
Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements .....	13,500	16,025
Beginning Cash Balance .....	31,733	45,233
	-----	-----
Ending Cash Balance .....	\$ 45,233	\$ 61,258
	=====	=====

The accompanying notes to financial statement are an integral part of this statement.

COUNTY OF LEHIGH, PENNSYLVANIA  
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURT #31-1-07

*Notes to Financial Statement*  
*For the Period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007*

1. **Summary of Significant Accounting Policy**

**A. Reporting Entity**

The Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's financial activity is a part of the County of Lehigh's reporting entity, included in the general fund and is subject to annual financial audit by external auditors. This report is only for internal audit purposes.

**B. Basis of Accounting**

The accounting records of the County of Lehigh and the Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and Changes in Cash Balance are maintained on the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting. Under this basis of accounting, revenue is recognized when cash is received and expenditures are recognized when paid. This differs from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) which requires the accrual basis of accounting.

**C. Administrative Guidelines**

An automated *Clerical Procedures Manual* is published by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). Each magisterial district court is required to follow the procedures mandated under the authority of Rule 505 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration.

**D. Magisterial District Judge During the Audit Period**

Joan L. Snyder was the magisterial district judge for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007.

2. **Other Disbursements**

Other disbursements include refund of overpayments, restitution, refund of bail security, serving costs, and other miscellaneous disbursements.



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Magisterial District Judge Robert C. Halal  
Magisterial District Court #31-1-07  
3350 MacArthur Road  
Whitehall, PA 18052

We have audited the financial statements of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07 for the audit period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007 and have issued our report thereon dated June 5, 2008. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the Statement of Receipts and Disbursements and the Changes in Cash Balance but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control over financial reporting.

A control deficiency exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect misstatements on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a control deficiency, or combination of control deficiencies, that adversely affects the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's ability to initiate, authorize, record, process, or report financial data reliably in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles such that there is more than a remote likelihood that a misstatement of the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's financial statements that is more than inconsequential will not be prevented or detected by the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control.

A material weakness is a significant deficiency, or combination of significant deficiencies, that results in more than a remote likelihood that a material misstatement of the financial statements will not be prevented or detected by the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above.



As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

We noted certain matters that we reported to management of Magisterial District Court #31-1-07 in a separate section titled "*Schedule of Audit Findings and Recommendations*".

Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's response to the findings identified in our audit are included in this report. We did not audit Magisterial District Court #31-1-07's response and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion on it.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management and other affected county offices and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.



Thomas Sionaker  
County Controller

June 5, 2008  
Allentown, Pennsylvania

COUNTY OF LEHIGH, PENNSYLVANIA  
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURT #31-1-07

*Schedule of Audit Findings and Recommendations*

1. Void Receipts Not Always Approved by Magisterial District Court Management

**Condition:** Magisterial district court management did not always approve the void receipts. The current void receipt policy (April 2002) states: “*When it is necessary to void a receipt that was issued in the district court office, the office manager should initial the daily deposit listing that is printed at the end of each day that shows the voided item. If it is the office manager who issued the receipt that required the void, the district justice must be the individual who initials the daily deposit listing for that specific item.*” An unauthorized void receipt could result in the misappropriation of cash.

**Recommendation:** All void receipts listed on the “Daily Cash Balancing Report” known in the current void receipt policy, as the daily deposit listing should be initialed by the magisterial district court management. The void receipt (which includes an explanation for the void and the replacement receipt number) should be attached to the “Daily Cash Balancing Report”. An additional copy of the void receipt should be attached to the case papers.

2. Clerical Errors on the “Server 1099 Report”

**Condition:** The year-end “Server 1099 Report”, which summarizes all constable payment activity for the year, contained clerical errors. An example of a clerical error would be the magisterial district court staff combining constable serving fees and mileage fees as reported on the “Constable Payment Request” into one amount called serving fees. Combining two or more constable fees does not provide an accurate accounting of the constable’s yearly activity.

**Recommendation:** The magisterial district court management should instruct the entire staff on the correct way to enter the constable payment information per the AOPC Clerical Procedures Manual.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



COUNTY OF LEHIGH

ROBERT C HALAL

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT JUDGE

Magisterial District 31-1-07  
3354 MacArthur Rd  
Whitehall, PA 18052

TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL  
BOROUGH OF COPLAY

OFFICE:  
TEL: 610-437-6096  
FAX: 610-437-3462

June 5, 2008

Thomas Slonaker, Lehigh County Controller  
Lehigh County Government Center  
17 South Seventh Street  
Allentown PA 18101-2400

Dear Mr Slonaker,

We understand the findings of your audit and they have been corrected.

Tonya Stephens, office manager, started here on July 23, 2007 and I was appointed to this office on November 1, 2007.

As you know, there have been Senior Magisterial District Judges in this office during January 1, 2006 through October 31, 2007. They were Thomas Murphy, John Dugan, Ed Hartman and Richard Gatti. The elected Magisterial District Judge was Joan Snyder.

Therefore, I am not responsible for the findings of this audit but will be sure they are corrected.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert C. Halal".

Robert C Halal  
Magisterial District Judge

RCH:tls



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July 7, 2008

Magisterial District Judge Robert C. Halal  
Magisterial District Court #31-01-07  
3350 MacArthur Road  
Whitehall, PA 10852

We are correcting 1(D) of the Notes to Financial Statement (Page 4) of the financial audit of Magisterial District Court #31-01-07 for the period January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2007 (Audit Report #08-33). The correct wording for 1 (D) should be:

“Joan L. Snyder was the magisterial district judge for the period January 1, 2006 to May 31 2007.”

Please attach this letter to the audit report that our office issued on June 11, 2008.



THOMAS SLONAKER  
County Controller

cc:  
Auditor General of Pennsylvania  
Board of Commissioners  
Borough of Coplay  
Donald T. Cunningham, Jr., County Executive  
Brian L. Kahler, Fiscal Officer  
The Honorable William H. Platt, President Judge  
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Kathy Sauter, AOPC  
Senior MDJ Joan L. Snyder  
Whitehall Township