

**TARRANT COUNTY**  
TARRANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - ROOM 506  
100 E. WEATHERFORD  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76196-0103  
817/884-1205  
Fax 817/884-1104

S. RENEE TIDWELL, CPA  
COUNTY AUDITOR  
rtidwell@tarrantcounty.com

KIM BUCHANAN, CPA  
FIRST ASSISTANT COUNTY AUDITOR  
kmbuchanan@tarrantcounty.com

April 18, 2022

Christopher Nchopa-Ayafor, Chief Information Officer  
The Honorable Tarrant County Constables, Precincts 1 - 8  
The Honorable District Judges  
The Honorable Commissioners Court  
Tarrant County, Texas

RE: Auditor's Report – Constable *CivilServe* Financial and System Controls

## SUMMARY

We initiated a review to determine whether financial and system controls were adequate to reasonably ensure fees were accurately assessed, collected, recorded, and deposited. *CivilServe*, a Tyler Technologies software, went live on January 1, 2022. The system replaced *KC6M Mainframe* used by the Constables to record service activity and financial information for civil papers. Because *CivilServe* does not have system controls to mitigate the risk of certain errors or fraud, a *significant material risk* exists. As a result, we offer no assurance that all funds collected will be accounted for. Specifically, we observed:

- 1) *The ability to segregate certain duties between incompatible tasks does not exist.* Users can issue, void, and refund their own receipts. Furthermore, current configuration allows deputy constables to create, modify, and delete financial information even though they have limited financial responsibilities.
- 2) *System controls related to modification of certain financial transactions are especially vulnerable to errors and irregularities, including fraud.* Specifically:
  - Receipts can be manually edited, rather than voided, prior to deposit.
  - Users can manually adjust system generated fees and balances.
  - System does not have controls to prevent staff from selecting the incorrect fee status or action type. For example, when a “Normal” fee status was selected for papers with an affidavit of inability to pay, the system calculated a balance due requiring a manual adjustment. Additionally, if the incorrect action type is selected for Attorney General citations billing could be incorrectly generated.

While certain *CivilServe* reports include voided transactions and manual edits to receipt amounts, no comprehensive report exists that identifies changes to receipts and balances.

- 3) *Current system functionality does not allow users to readily track and account for funds transferred to other parties or Precincts.* Each of the eight precincts have a separate database in *CivilServe*, which creates limitations when using a centralized location (Pct. 1, the “Hub”) to record payments and disburse papers to the appropriate precincts. For example, when the Hub records a partial payment on behalf of another precinct, the precinct cannot view the Hub’s financial information and may not have an accurate account of the remaining balance. Additionally, when the Hub enters a receipt on behalf of another precinct, *CivilServe* does not recognize the payment as a valid disbursement. Therefore, the amounts received and disbursed in the system may not accurately reflect financial activity.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend ITD continue to work with the vendor to resolve system functionality issues immediately. In the interim, the Auditor’s Office will work with the Constables’ staff to ensure adequate procedures are in place to review adjustments vulnerable to errors and possible irregularities.

For all software implementations, we recommend ITD implement procedures to ensure:

- 1) All stakeholders are identified and engaged at the appropriate level, including the Auditor’s Office,
- 2) System functionality exists to provide appropriate roles and permissions prior to go-live,
- 3) The system has the ability to produce all required reports identified by stakeholders as necessary (i.e. an audit trail report), and
- 4) The Auditor’s Office reviews and approves all software systems having a financial component prior to go-live.

### CLOSING REMARKS

We appreciate the assistance of the Constables and ITD staff during this review. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

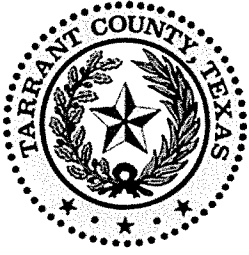


S. Renee Tidwell, CPA  
County Auditor

*Distribution:* G.K. Maenius, County Administrator  
Russell D. Scott, Deputy CIO  
Melei H. Kelly, Senior IT Resource Manager

*Audit Team:* Matthew Jones, Audit Manager  
Kara Hoekstra, Senior Internal Auditor  
Salima Sindhvani, Senior Internal Auditor

*Attachment:* Management’s response



**Information Technology**

*Business First,  
Technology Second*

**Chief Information  
Officer**  
Chris Nchopa-Ayafor

**Executive Assistant  
to CIO**  
Cecilia Webb

**Deputy CIO**  
Russell Scott

**Project Portfolio  
Management Office  
Director**  
Peju Ajunwon

**IT Service Delivery  
Director**  
Carolyn J. Bogan

**Network & Data  
Center Infrastructure  
Director**  
Anthony Jackson

**Business Application  
Development & Support  
Director**  
Michael Webb

**Information Security  
Officer**  
Darren May

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200 Taylor Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76196

Phone: 817.884.3888  
Fax: 817.212.3060

[www.tarrantcounty.com](http://www.tarrantcounty.com)

DATE: April 28, 2022

TO: Renee Tidwell

FROM: Chris Nchopa-Ayafor

SUBJECT: Auditor's Report – Constable CivilServe System Limitations

ITD has reviewed the identified deficiencies and recommended procedural changes. We are working to update processes regarding stakeholder involvement in projects to ensure the Auditor's office has the opportunity to review project charters and determine their requirements and level of involvement as early as possible in projects.

- 1) *The ability to segregate certain duties between incompatible tasks does not exist.* While the core software has this capability, ITD was requested by the Constables to configure permissions as currently implemented. This situation highlights the need for ITD to engage with the Auditor's office more fully for projects going forward to ensure any mismatches in requirements and expectations are addressed as early in the project as possible.
- 2) *System controls related to modification of certain financial transaction are especially vulnerable to errors and irregularities, including fraud.* ITD is continuing to work with the vendor, Tyler Technologies, the Auditor's office and the Constables to determine the best approach to resolving the three areas of concern noted.
- 3) *Current system functionality does not allow users to readily track and account for funds transferred to other parties or Precincts.* There are two concurrent streams of activity underway to address this concern. ITD is working with the vendor to integrate with their Odyssey product as well as the District Clerk's JIMS system. The other activity stream is the creation of reporting to address the concerns of the Auditor's office. ITD is engaged with the Auditor's office and the vendor to gather all requirements for this reporting.

We would like to thank the Auditor's office for working with us to identify these deficiencies and develop an acceptable course of action to address them.