



LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
DARYL G. PURPERA, CPA, CFE

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EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH FAMILY COURT JUDICIAL EXPENSE FUND

A former court reporter in the East Baton Rouge Parish Family Court failed to remit between \$3,600 and \$7,600 in transcript fees to the court, and the case has been turned over to the sheriff's office for investigation, according to an audit made public Monday by Legislative Auditor Daryl Purpera.

The audit report, compiled by the certified public accounting firm of Hawthorn, Waymouth and Carroll LLP of Baton Rouge, covered the court's fiscal year ending December 31, 2012. The report said the Family Court officials identified a total of \$3,615.50 in underpayments to the court of appeals transcripts by one court reporter.

The state Board of Ethics is also investigating the matter.

The report said the court was able to research transcript billings from the reporter involved back to 2007, but because of a change in software in the family court clerk's office, a review for earlier years was not possible.

Court officials said in their response that there were likely issues from earlier years and from transcripts ordered in cases that were not on appeal. The court estimated the amount to be between \$2,000 and \$4,000.

The report did not identify the court reporter, who quit after becoming aware of questions regarding the court's reimbursement for transcripts.

Court officials said in their response that the court reporter resigned before any action could be taken, and they reached a settlement with her for repayment of \$6,000. She has paid \$5,300 and owes a balance of \$700 due by the end of the year.



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The request for an appeal transcript in the Family Court originates in the appeals division of the East Baton Rouge Clerk of Court. These transcript requests were then forwarded to the court reporter and the 19th Judicial Court with the understanding the fees would be remitted to the Family Court by the court reporters. The court reporter allegedly retained the fees due the Family Court on appeal transcripts. This was possible because the court had no knowledge that the transcripts ordered.

The report stated that the Family Court has changed the way that it processes transcripts

For more information, contact:

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE
Legislative Auditor
225-339-3800

On Twitter: Former court reporter in EBR Parish Family Court failed to remit between \$3,600 and \$7,600 in transcript fees.