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Forsyth County Clerk of Superior Court

February 18, 2016

Financial Management System (FMS)

FMS was started in 1989, with Cumberland County being the first county to begin using it in 1993 and Polk County as the last county in 1998.

As the Judicial System has changed over the years, the Criminal and Civil divisions have experienced significant changes regarding how and why money is taken into the Clerk's Office:

1. Nearly all proceedings in the court system require money to be paid into the Clerk's office in civil, criminal and estate matters.
2. Jury payments are handled by the Clerk's office.
3. Criminal cases have added additional cost and fees. Including entering civil judgments against defendants for attorney fees.
4. The number of Foreclosures in the Civil Division has exploded.
5. Foreclosures often require the handling of numerous upset bids and/or surplus funds.
6. Any surplus funds over $10,000 must be invested within 90 days. The amount of surplus funds has increased as the number of foreclosure and other civil cases has increased.
7. The number of trust accounts due to minor settlements has doubled. Money from these trust accounts is required to be invested within 90 days of receipt.
8. All appealed evictions require a rent bond.
9. When Child Support purge payments are taken, the Clerks issue a check to the State Child Enforcement who in turn issues a check to the person receiving child support. *This results in duplicate work because two checks are being issued.* Last year, in Forsyth County we issued over 15,000 checks.

FMS does not interact with any other Judicial Programs such as the Criminal Court Information System Clerks Component (CCIS-CC) or the Civil Case Processing system (VCAP):

1. FMS only interacts with CCIS-CC for viewing payments and cost sheets.
2. When money is paid in traffic and criminal cases, it must be manually entered into the CCIS-CC as paid because it is not automatically added to CCIS-CC from FMS.
3. Money paid for judgments or liens cannot be viewed through VCAP.
4. VCAP has six different screens for entering upset bids for Foreclosures.
5. Joint/Several Liability cases are paid by file number and not by name. If a probation officer or anyone else looks at the screens they cannot tell who made the payment.
6. Bookkeepers need the ability to instantly see all remarks that have ever been entered as it would reduce the amount of time they spend searching for previous remarks.
7. The Sub-Ledger is a very outdated bookkeeping process for handling/tracking payments. All payments should be entered only by cases numbers because it would simplify tracking when payments have been made.
8. The General Ledger needs to show whether a credit card was used to make payment in order to ensure the proper processing of refunds.

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Reports do not provide needed information:

1. Child Support Payment Reports do not list the names of the receiving persons, but only the amount, date, and check number. This results in time being wasted to verify checks.
2. The Criminal Payment Status Report does not show balances, meaning balances must be found manually since they are not in the system.

Magistrates should be included in a future system:

1. The system should allow magistrates to receipt money as a cashier. Currently, magistrates receive money, write paper receipts, and then deliver the money to the Clerk's Office to be verified by the Clerk. ***This is an extremely time consuming process that raises significant security concerns.*** Magistrates personally transport large amounts of money into the Clerk's office every Monday morning and the day after any Holiday. ***We have been very fortunate that nothing has happened to these Magistrates!***

A new bookkeeping system:

We need a new bookkeeping system that shares any entered information with both CCIS-CC and VCAP. All information regarding monetary payment should automatically populate VCAP and CCIS-CC. Additionally, all monetary information should be entered only by case number to allow all payment information to be viewed by all clerks. Another significant feature of a new system should be a consistent date method (i.e. YEARMMDD or MMDDYEAR). The new system should allow magistrates to enter payment information. Modern features used by most major businesses should be added, including: allowing and properly documenting credit card/online payments, allowing and properly documenting payments via electronic devices, and electronic receipts.