



**APA**  
Auditor of  
Public Accounts  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## Court Accounts Receivable

### Court Accounts Receivable Study



April Gunn, CPA, CITP, CISA  
Director, Auditor of Public  
Accounts  
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### Study – Court Accounts Receivable

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- Reviewed current procedures compared to best practices
- National Center for State Courts source of best practices
- Current Practices in Collecting Fines and Fees in State Courts: A Handbook of Collection Issues and Solutions



# Emphasize Collections

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- Clerks/Staff
  - Initial collection attempt
  - Emphasized as integral part of punishment
  - Mandate additional follow-up procedures
  - Establish collection goals
- Commonwealth Attorneys
  - Not primary responsibility
  - Mandate performance evaluations for contracts



### Utilize Best Collection Method

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- Taxation's Court Debt Collection Unit has highest collection rate and lowest collection fee
- Four localities choose to switch away from Taxation during FY12

Method	Number of Localities	Net Collection Rate	Collection Fee
In-House	12	19.5%	33.9%
Private attorney or collection agent	19	31.5%	25.54%
Court Debt Collection Unit (CDC) – Taxation	97	65.5%	17.0%
Local agreement	3	28.80%	32.3%



### **Cost/Benefit Analysis – Specialized Unit**

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- Recommendation to perform a cost/benefit analysis of establishing a specialized court collection unit
- No one entity responsible for entire process from adjudication to delinquent collections
- Includes several components such as a dedicated staff, defendant interviews, follow-up procedures, and monitoring
- Cost/Benefit analysis would determine whether the unit could fund itself and produce more revenue for the Commonwealth



### Summary

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- Establish methods to emphasize collections
- Require the usage of the Department of Taxation's Court Debt Collection Unit
- Perform cost/benefit analysis of specialized court collection unit