

Hinds County Dept. of Budget and Finance
ATTN: Ms. Nkemdili Lewis
P.O. Box 686
Jackson, MS 39205-0686

Re: Public Records Request for Administrative Records

Dear Ms. Lewis,

I am a student at the University of California, Berkeley, researching fines and fees collected by youth courts and chancery courts across the country. As a research institution, we want to better understand the landscape of youth court fines and fees, their impact on youth and families, and the impacts of both collection processes and fines and fees on local government funding in the interest of optimizing the system.

I am writing to request a copy of the records detailed below under the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983 (Mississippi Code § 25-61-1, et seq.) and the Mississippi Ethics Commission's Model for Public Record Rules. If there is another county entity or individual better able to respond to these requests, we would appreciate you connecting us to them or forwarding this request.

To the extent that you are aware of additional records that may be related or relevant to those below, even if we have not specifically listed them, we request that you provide these records as well. We request that you provide such records dating from the 2016 fiscal year, through the present, broken down by fiscal year. To be clear, **we are not requesting records with personally identifiable information, nor are we requesting records of specific accounts or case files.**

We request the following public records as defined by the Act (Miss. Code § 25-61-3):

- 1. Funds remitted from youth courts to the general fund:** Records relating to all payments or remittance made to the county general fund by the Hinds County Youth Court, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The total dollar amount remitted from the Hinds County Youth Court to the Hinds County General Fund;
 - b. The total dollar amount of funds projected or budgeted to be collected by the Hinds County Youth Court for any collections that are pending deposit;
 - c. The number of collection actions or accounts collected on, as represented in the total dollar amount remitted, including outstanding account balances;
 - d. The types of fines, fees or court costs they represent;

- e. The Youth Court Fee Schedule or other records indicating the amounts assessed for each type of fine, fee, surcharge, interest, or other costs;
 - f. The range of amounts assessed, if available;
 - g. The dollar amount spent on collections by county employees each fiscal year for all youth court assessments, including any administrative fees; and
 - h. Any other records related to funds deposited into the Hinds County General Fund on behalf of the Hinds County Youth Court.
- 2. Overall revenue and expenditures related to the Hinds County Youth Court:** Records relating to the fiscal operations of the youth court, including records detailing:
- a. The county budget with revenue, expenditures, and line-item details for each department;
 - b. The total amount (in dollars) spent on collection by county employees each fiscal year for all youth court assessments, including any state-authorized administration fees; and
 - c. The name of the department or agency responsible for collection of youth court assessments.

To the extent possible, please note which records relate to which requests according to the numbered sections above. If specific portions of any documents are exempt from disclosure, please provide the non-exempt portions, cite each specific exemption you feel justifies the refusal to release the information, and notify me of the appeal procedures available to me under the law. Please provide entire documents, even if only parts of them are responsive to this request.

Pursuant to Mississippi Code § 25-61-5, please respond to this request within seven (7) business days, either by providing all the requested records or by providing a written response setting forth the statutory authority for withholding or redacting any document and stating when the documents will be made available.

If you maintain records in electronic format, please provide them in that same format to avoid copying costs. If you anticipate the direct costs related to providing this information will exceed \$50, or that the time needed to copy the records will delay their release, please contact me so that I can decide which documents I wish to have copied. Otherwise, please copy and send them as soon as possible.

If I can provide any clarification that will help identify responsive documents or focus this request, please contact me by telephone at {____} or by email at {____}.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

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Clinical Student