



**State of New Mexico**  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR**

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**Wayne Johnson Announces Criminal Justice System Audit**  
*Study seeks to identify dangerous gaps leading to violent crime by repeat offenders*

**Santa Fe, NM** – State Auditor Wayne Johnson today announced that he has initiated a special audit of seven different entities within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District that form the core of our criminal justice system. Johnson’s objective is to identify problems that cause the system to fail New Mexicans and place our families at risk of violent crime.

Johnson says his office will take an auditor’s approach to crime in Albuquerque and to the many different systems that we collectively call our justice system.

“We want to find what factors reduce the overall effectiveness of our criminal justice system, and what places our community at risk,” Johnson said during today’s announcement.

The following entities will be involved in the systemic audit of the criminal justice center in the metro area:

- District Court, 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District
- Metro Court
- Albuquerque Police Department
- Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Department
- Metropolitan Detention Center
- Public Defender’s Office
- District Attorney’s Office

In 2017, the DA asked for detention of roughly 16% of felony filings. Of those, judges denied roughly half, leading to an overall detention rate of 8%. Of the people who were released, a third of them went on to commit new crimes.

Johnson and members of his staff met with the agencies involved in recent weeks to discuss the system failures and plan for an audit process that will identify the gaps. Johnson says each

agency will contract with an independent public accountant to audit its policies and processes, and help identify any gaps in the shared system.

The State Auditor relayed the story about Charles Taylor, a man accused of brutally attacking and raping a 57-year-old woman in her home just days after he was released on auto burglary charges because the judge did not have all of the information about Taylor's arrest record. Statistics show that repeat offenders are responsible for a significant percentage of the crimes being committed.

"As auditors, we can look at each piece of the system and how those pieces mesh together," says Johnson. "We can help mend the cracks that lead to horrible crimes like the one Taylor is accused of committing."

"When judges and prosecutors don't have all the facts because the systems aren't communicating, criminals like Charles Taylor fall through the cracks. The consequences are devastating for people's lives and for the City of Albuquerque as a whole. We can do better," said Johnson.

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