GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY · WASHINGTON & BOONE COUNTIES, ARKANSAS

Why public records matter

Four recent cases close to home, each documented in audits, court filings and public board records that any citizen can request.

BOONE COUNTY · 2025–26 **CHARGED · PENDING**

Missing county money

A state audit found a county employee stole from several county accounts. [1]

Ex-emergency management director: charged with theft, abuse of office, evidence tampering. Pleaded not guilty. [2, 3]

County Judge: charged for not reporting the card misuse. Resigned March 2026. Signed a plea deal in Nov. (misdemeanor, felony dropped), awaiting a judge's approval. [1, 3]

County Assessor: misdemeanor charge over a county purchase card. Resigned Nov. 2026. [4]

WASHINGTON COUNTY JAIL · 2021–23 **SETTLED**

Medicine without consent

Detainees sick with COVID were given ivermectin; a federal civil-rights suit said they were never told. The state Medical Board found no ivermectin-specific consent forms signed. [5]

Outcome: $2,000 to each of five plaintiffs, no admission of wrongdoing; consent procedures improved. [5]

PRAIRIE GROVE · 2024–25 **DECERTIFIED**

An officer’s word in question

The police chief asked the state to decertify a former officer, saying she lied multiple times. She consented to decertification without a hearing in Nov. 2025. [6]

Why it matters: an officer's credibility can decide a case.

WEST FORK · 2022–25 **ACQUITTED · DECERTIFIED**

A death in custody

A West Fork man died while being taken into custody in Dec. 2022. The officer was charged with negligent homicide. [7]

Outcome: acquitted by a jury in 2024, then decertified by the state commission. [7]

Every case left a paper trail

The Arkansas FOIA lets any citizen request records of public business: audits, spending, contracts, police and board records.

Public meetings must be recorded and kept at least a year. One Arkansas town that didn't admitted it broke the law. [8]

Ask for the records. Read them yourself.

Charges are accusations. Anyone charged is presumed innocent unless proven guilty. Status as last reported in the sources below.

1. Arkansas State Police release, Feb. 27, 2026
2. KTLO, Mar. 3, 2026
3. KOMC, Mar. 2026; Harrison Daily Times, Nov. 2026
4. KTLO, Apr. 2026; MoArk News Now, Nov. 2026
5. ACLU of Arkansas; AP; Washington Post, Oct. 2023
6. NWA Democrat-Gazette, Sept. 2024 & Nov. 2025
7. NWA Democrat-Gazette, Mar. 2025
8. NWA Democrat-Gazette, June 2023