



**Colorado Justice: Celebrating 42 years of fair
and impartial courts through merit selection**

news

Colorado Judicial Branch
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Colorado Judicial Branch Continues Service-Improvement Program *Sixth and Twenty-Second judicial districts to conduct surveys Aug 19 and 20*

The La Plata Combined Courts in the Sixth Judicial District and the Montezuma County District and County courts in the Twenty-Second Judicial District invite you to be the judge in a program designed to help the Colorado Judicial Branch gather needed information to ensure it is providing the best possible service to the public.

The Twenty-Second Judicial District survey will be conducted Aug. 19 at the Montezuma District Court (109 W. Main, Room 210) and Montezuma County Court (601 N. Mildred Road) in Cortez. The Sixth Judicial District survey will be conducted Aug. 20, 2008, at the La Plata Combined Courts (1060 E. 2nd Ave.) in Durango.

Judges, clerks and other court employees will talk to people – in English and Spanish – about their experiences as jurors, parties to a case or as recipients of other Judicial Branch services. Attorneys, law enforcement officers and anyone who does business with the courts also will be encouraged to participate. The judicial employees will be stationed outside the court buildings asking people if they had business with the courts and are willing to participate in a brief anonymous survey.

The data will be used to measure public opinion about access to and fairness of the courts. People will be asked whether they had problems finding the Courts Complex, whether they could easily understand the forms they needed, whether they felt safe in the building and other related questions.

Surveyors also will ask people whether they felt their case was handled in a fair manner, whether the judge or magistrate listened to them and had all the necessary information before making a decision, and whether they felt they were treated with courtesy, understood what was happening in their case and were given clear information about the next step in their case.

“These are the people’s courts,” Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Mullarkey said.

“Coloradans deserve the best the Judicial Branch can possibly offer them.”

Similar surveys are in use by several other court systems including Arizona and the District of Columbia as part of a program developed by the National Center for State Courts.

“CourTools has provided us with valuable insight that has allowed us to strengthen the courts’ effectiveness while at the same time becoming more transparent,” said Dan Becker, Utah’s state court administrator.

In Fiscal Year 2008 (July 1, 2007- June 30 2008) there were more than 4,200 cases filed in the Montezuma District and County courts. That number includes 3,521 cases filed in county court and 752 in district court. During that same time period there were 7,178 cases filed in La Plata County Combined Courts. That number includes 5,388 cases filed in county court, 1610 in district court and 180 water cases.