



# news

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## **Colorado courts service-improvement program returns to Otero County** *Surveys to be conducted Oct. 9 at the Otero Combined Court*

LA JUNTA, Colo. – People with business at the Otero Combined Court on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2013, will be asked to participate in a program designed to help ensure the Colorado Judicial Branch is providing the best possible service to the public.

Throughout the day, court employees at 13 West Third Street in La Junta will ask people exiting the building to fill out brief, anonymous survey forms asking about their experiences as jurors, parties to a case or as recipients of other Judicial Branch services. Survey forms will be available in English and Spanish.

In addition, attorneys, law enforcement officers and anyone else who does business with the courts is encouraged to participate.

These surveys were last conducted in fall 2010 in the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (Bent, Crowley and Otero counties). Since 2007, these surveys have been conducted at least once in each of Colorado's 22 judicial districts.

“These are the public's courts, and we have a responsibility to ensure they're serving the public as best they can,” said Chief Judge Mark A. MacDonnell. “Gathering this kind of feedback from the people who use the courts is the best way to gauge the quality of service we're providing.”

The surveys are designed to measure public opinion about access to and fairness of the courts. Questions include whether people felt safe in the building, whether they could easily understand the forms they needed, and whether they felt their case was handled in a fair manner. Participants also are asked whether they felt the judicial officer listened to them and had all the necessary information before making a decision, and whether they felt they were treated with courtesy and given clear information about the next step in their case.

During Fiscal Year 2012, 5,504 cases were filed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, including 1,065 in District Court in Otero County, and 2,621 in Otero County Court.