



news

Colorado Judicial Branch
Michael L. Bender, Chief Justice
Gerald Marroney, State Court Administrator

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Contact: Robert McCallum or Jon Sarché
303-837-3633
303-837-3644

robert.mccallum@judicial.state.co.us
jon.sarche@judicial.state.co.us

Court service-improvement program returning to Weld County *Surveys to be conducted May 18 at the Weld County Court Complex*

GREELEY, Colo. – Three years after using public surveys to gather information to help improve the way the courts of Colorado’s 19th Judicial District conduct their business, judges, magistrates, clerks and other court employees will collect more data this week.

“We see this program as a crucial tool in helping us make sure we are providing the best service possible to the public,” 19th Judicial District Chief Judge James F. Hartmann Jr. said. “We’re looking forward to gaining new insight to help guide our continuing efforts.”

On Wednesday, May 18, court employees will spend time talking to people 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 will be encouraged to participate. People exiting the buildings at the Weld County Court Complex will be asked whether they had business with the courts and are willing to fill out a brief anonymous survey. Survey forms will be available in English and Spanish.

The survey is 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 judge or magistrate listened to them, whether they 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.

The new information will be used not only to check the progress of changes initiated since the first round of surveys, but also to support the possibility of further improvements. Two areas initially identified as needing attention were the website and setting performance goals. The website has been completely redesigned to improve access and usability. The district also now regularly monitors case processing, data integrity, and case closure rates to further help ensure the second area is being addressed.

Since 2008, the surveys have been used at least once in each of Colorado's 22 judicial districts. Weld County was one of the first Districts to participate in the initial survey.

In Fiscal Year 2010, more than 43,100 cases were filed in the Weld County Combined Courts. That number includes 12,615 cases filed in District Court, 509 in the Water Court and 30,039 in Weld County Court.