



# news

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## **Colorado courts service-improvement plan returns to Cortez** *Public surveys to be conducted July 21*

CORTEZ, Colo. – After using public surveys in the past to gather information to help improve the way the courts of Colorado’s 22nd Judicial District (Dolores and Montezuma counties) operate, court employees will collect more data this week in Cortez.

On Thursday, July 21, judicial officers, clerks and other 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 leaving the Montezuma County Courthouse will be asked whether they had business with the courts and are willing to fill out a brief anonymous survey. The survey forms will be available both in English and Spanish.

“Anybody who comes through the courthouse doors deserves the best possible service we can provide,” said 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Chief Judge Douglas S. Walker. “In the past, these surveys proved to be extremely useful in helping us measure public satisfaction with the way these courts operate, and we look forward to gaining more insight to help guide our continuing efforts.”

The survey is designed to gauge 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.

Beginning in 2008, the Judicial Department has conducted surveys at least once in each of Colorado's 22 judicial districts.

In Fiscal Year 2010, about 4,900 cases were filed in the courts of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District. That number includes 1,152 cases filed in District Court and 3,459 in Montezuma County Court.