



# Strategic Planning Survey Report: Summary and Findings

*(External Partners, Court Users, and Judges/Employees)*

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Prepared By:

**PRAXIS**  
CONSULTING, INC.

Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey,  
CEO, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., Denver, CO  
303.888.7939 | [bwagen@praxisconsulting.org](mailto:bwagen@praxisconsulting.org)  
[www.praxisconsulting.org](http://www.praxisconsulting.org)

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## OVERVIEW

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### Overview of 2023 - 2024 Strategic Planning Surveys

1. Purpose: to gather information from external partners, court users, judicial officers, and court employees to help update the Court's Strategic Plan.
2. Three surveys were administered by PRAXIS Consulting, Inc./ Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey and the Court in December 2023 – January 2024.
  - Survey 1: to all judicial officers and court employees; administered in December 2023
  - Survey 2: to external partners and stakeholders; administered in December 2023 (see list on the next slide)
  - Survey 3: to court users for 2.5 weeks in January 2024. Courthouse security and staff in each location assisted in handing out cards about the survey. QR codes also were posted on digital signage at each location. (see more details on the next slide)



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## Overview (cont.)

3. Survey #2: was sent to 15 partner and stakeholder agencies including:
- Bar Associations (Santa Barbara, Northern Santa Barbara)
  - District Attorney's Office
  - Public Defender's Office
  - California Highway Patrol (Buellton, Santa Mara, Santa Barbara)
  - Police Departments (Lompoc, Santa Maria)
  - Sheriff, Under Sheriff
  - Probation Department
  - Director of Child Support Services
  - Legal Aid Foundation
  - County Executive Office / Board of Supervisors
4. Survey #3: the court user survey was intended for anyone doing in-person or virtual business with the Court during the survey period. Litigants, family members, members of the public, jurors, victims/witnesses, etc. were asked to complete the survey. Court user respondents also included attorneys and other professionals / partners who did not complete the External Partner Survey.



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## Overview - Number of Respondents (cont.)

| 2023 – 2024          |                         |                           |                          | 2016                     | 2009                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Surveys              | Total Surveyed<br>(N= ) | Number Responded<br>(n= ) | Response Rate<br>(in %s) | Response Rate<br>(n= )   | Response Rate<br>(n= )  |
| Judges/<br>Employees | N=254                   | n=181                     | 71%                      | 74%<br>(n=189)<br>N=254  | 58%<br>(n=176)<br>N=302 |
| External<br>Partners | -- <sup>1</sup>         | n=248                     | -- <sup>1</sup>          | 50%<br>(n=571)<br>N=1145 | --                      |
| Court Users          | -- <sup>2</sup>         | n=94                      | -- <sup>2</sup>          | --                       | --                      |

<sup>1</sup> The total number of external partners who were sent the survey is unknown. Agency / organizational heads forwarded the survey link to people in their respective organizations who had frequent contact with the Court over the past 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> The total number of court users at court locations or who did business virtually during the survey period is unknown. Anyone at, or doing business with, the Court during the survey period, was asked, or had the opportunity, to complete the survey.

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## Overview (cont.)

5. Survey Questions: The strategic planning survey questions were from PRAXIS Consulting's database of questions. They were customized for the Santa Barbara Superior Court.

- ✓ The survey questions are designed to gather opinions, perceptions, and suggestions for use in strategic planning processes.
- ✓ The Court Performance / Court User Experience questions are designed around the long-standing and widely accepted (and adopted) Trial Court Performance Standards.
- ✓ The questions measure aspects of court performance / court user experience in 5 categories: (1) Accessibility, (2) Timeliness, (3) Fairness (outcome and procedural), (4) Quality/Effectiveness, and (5) Virtual Proceedings (new addition over the past 3 years).
- ✓ The survey findings help shape the future direction and priorities for Courts; the results help planning teams determine organizational priorities.



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## Overview – Survey Questions (cont.)

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**Most Needed Changes/ Improvements**  
(External Partners & Judges/Staff Only; 1 question with 15 items; rated all on level of priority – 10-point rating scale)

2

**Court Performance / User Experience**  
(External Partners, Judges/Staff, & Court Users; 1 question with 23 items; rated all on level of agreement – 6-point rating scale)

3

**Overall Court Performance**  
(External Partners, Judges/Staff, & Court Users; 1 question – rated on 5-point excellence scale)

4

**Court of the Future: Innovative Ideas/ Goals to Pursue**  
External Partners & Judges/Staff Only;  
Narrative/Open-Ended Question

5

**Strength of the Workplace, Court Culture, Satisfaction**  
(Employees Only; 1 question with 17 items; rated all on level of agreement – 6-point scale)

6

**Make the Court a Better Place to Work**  
Employees Only - Narrative/Open-Ended Question

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**Demographic Questions**  
(All; 6 questions for partners; 5 for judges/ employees; 7 for court users – see next slide)



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## Overview – Survey Questions (cont.)

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### Demographic Questions

#### External Partners (n=248)

1. Location with Most Frequent Contact
2. Role/Relationship to the Court
3. Division/Area with Most Frequent Contact
4. How Interacted with the Court/ How Conducted Court Business
5. Race
6. Ethnicity

#### Judicial Officers/Employees (n=181)

1. Current Position/Role
2. Primary Work Location/Assignment
3. Current Work Arrangement
4. Race
5. Ethnicity

#### Court Users (n=94)

1. How doing Court Business
2. Relationship to Court
3. Purpose of Court Business
4. Courthouse Location
5. Type of Legal Matter
6. Race
7. Ethnicity

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## DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

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## Data Analysis & Interpretation



1.  $n=$ \_\_: the number of respondents or responses.
2. The “n” sizes may vary because some respondents did not answer the question or answered Not Applicable / Don’t Know.
3. The survey results are presented in either proportions (i.e., percentages) or mean ratings (i.e., averages).
4. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.
5. 3 rating scales were used: see next slide

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## Rating Scales

### 10-Point Level of Priority

10 = Highest Priority  
1 = Lowest Priority  
N/A or Don’t Know

**Midpoint: 5.5**

### 6-Point Agreement

6 = Strongly Agree  
5 = Agree  
4 = Agree Somewhat  
3 = Disagree Somewhat  
2 = Disagree  
1 = Strongly Disagree  
N/A or Don’t Know

**Midpoint: 3.5**

### 5-Point Overall Performance

5 = Excellent  
4 = Good  
3 = Average  
2 = Fair  
1 = Poor  
N/A or Don’t Know

**Midpoint: 3.0**

**Interpretation:** The higher the mean score, the higher the priority or agreement level, or the more favorable the views on overall court performance. The midpoint of the 10-point scale is 5.5. The midpoint of a 6-point scale is 3.5. The midpoint of a 5-point scale is 3.0. Means above the midpoint are higher priorities, higher levels of agreement, and more favorable views of court performance. Means below the midpoints are lower priorities, lower levels of agreement, and unfavorable views of court performance.

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## Statistical Differences & Interpretation

### Testing for Statistically Significant Differences

6. Two common statistical tests were used to test for significant differences between and among mean ratings:
  - ✓ Tests for differences in means (t tests) – look for differences between 2 groups
  - ✓ Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) – looks for differences among multiple groups
7. Statistically significant differences are reported at the .05 or 95% confidence level (common for social science research)
8. Interpretation:
  - ✓ *A difference in mean score is statistically significant if there is a less than 5% probability that the difference could have occurred by chance alone (significant at the .05 level)*
  - ✓ Statistically significant differences in mean scores are noted with an \* (asterisk), pink shading, and/or a red star symbol: ★

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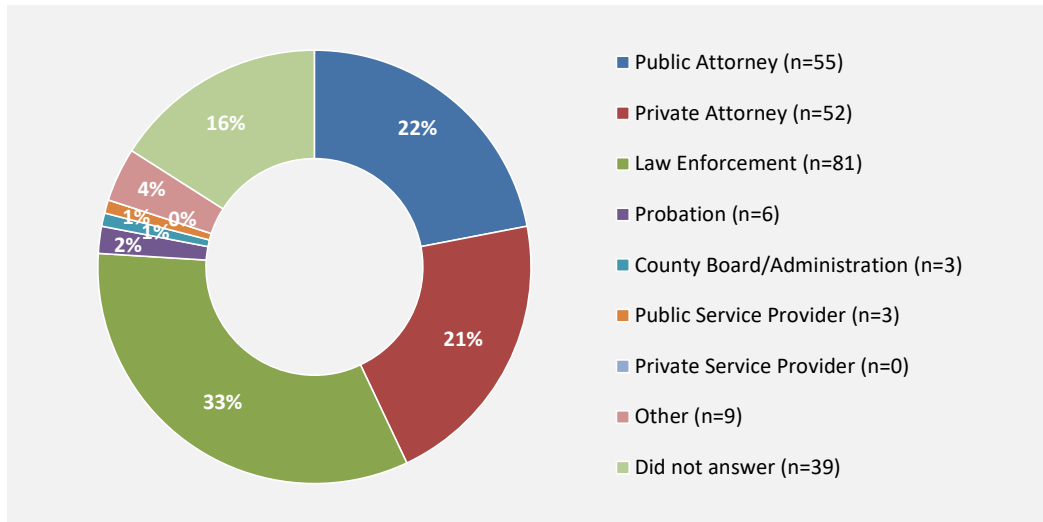
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# 3

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

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**External Partners:**  
By Relationship to the Court (Office/Group) (n=248; in percentages)

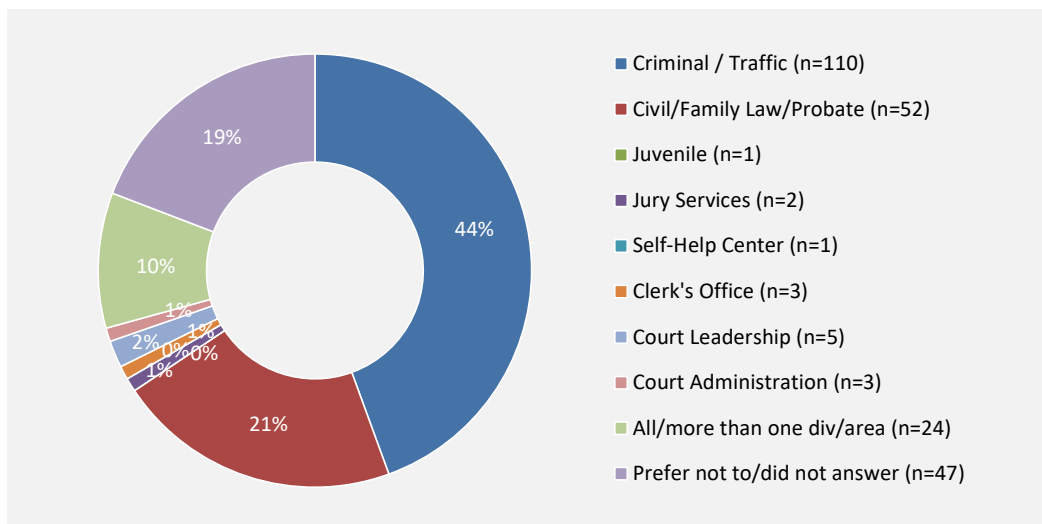


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**External Partners:**  
By Division/Area of the Court with Most Frequent Contact (n=248; in percentages)



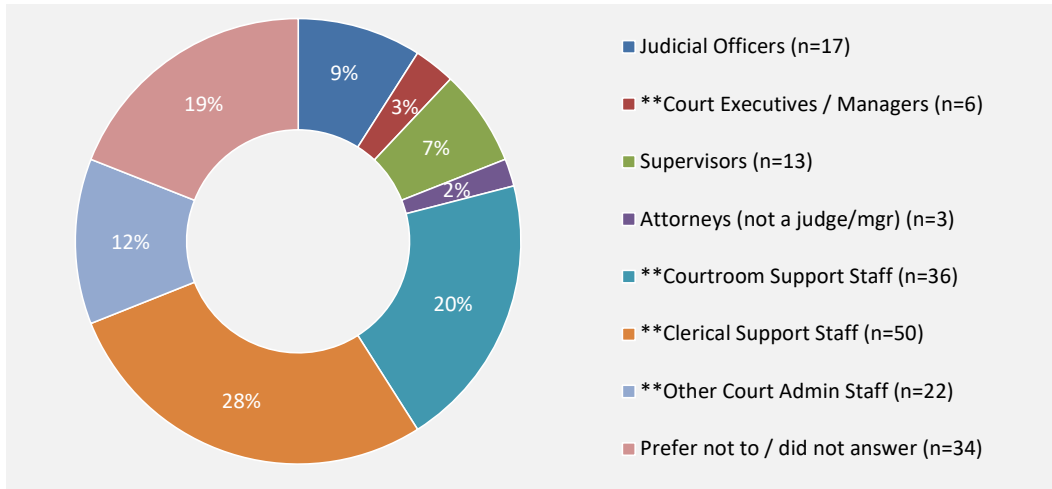
Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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### Judicial Officers / Court Employees: Current Role/Position (n=181; in percentages)



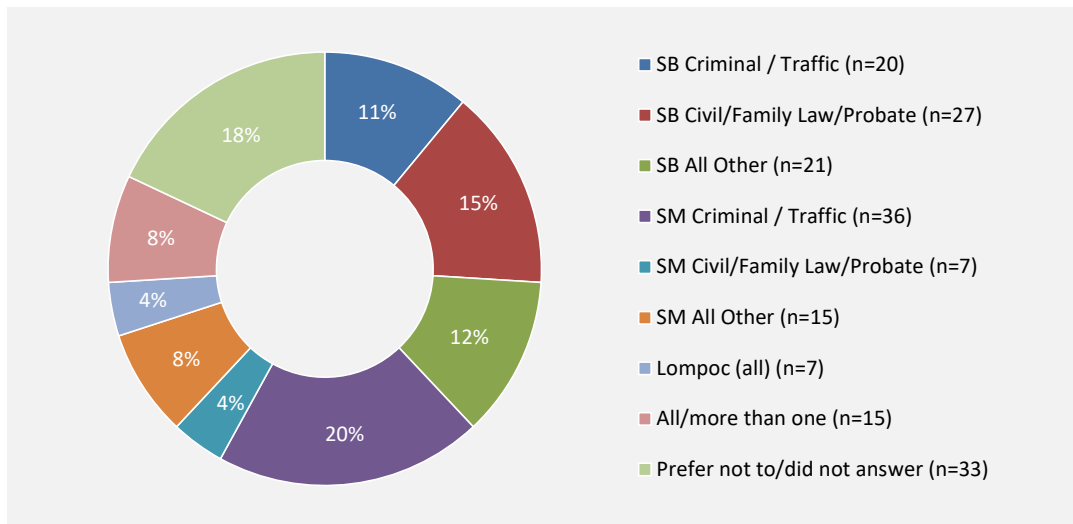
\*\* Court Executives = CEO, Assistant CEO, Directors, Managers; Courtroom Support Staff = judicial assistants, secretaries, court reporters, interpreters, investigators; Clerical Support Staff = judicial assistants; Other Court Administration Staff = IT, finance, collections, HR, jury services.

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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### Judges/Court Employees: By Area Primarily Assigned / Primary Work Location (n=181; in percentages)

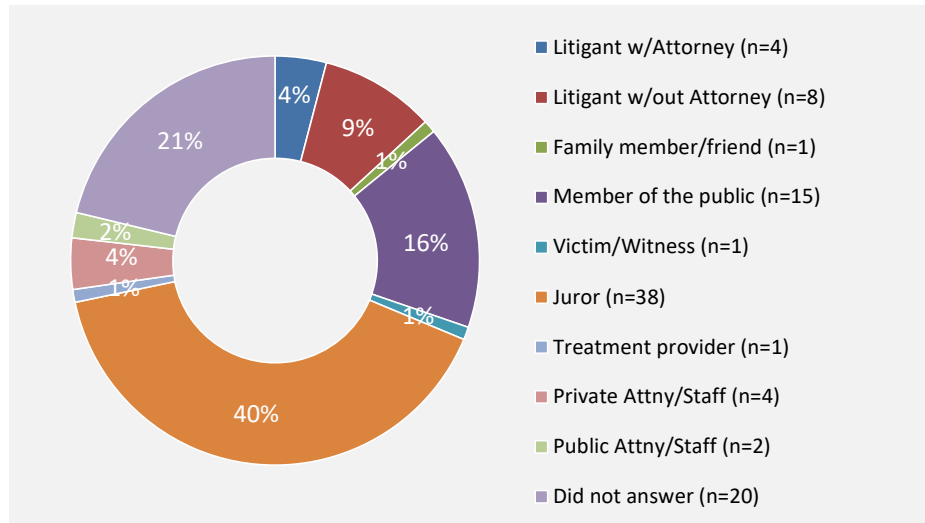


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**Court Users:**  
By Relationship to the Court (n=94; in percentages)

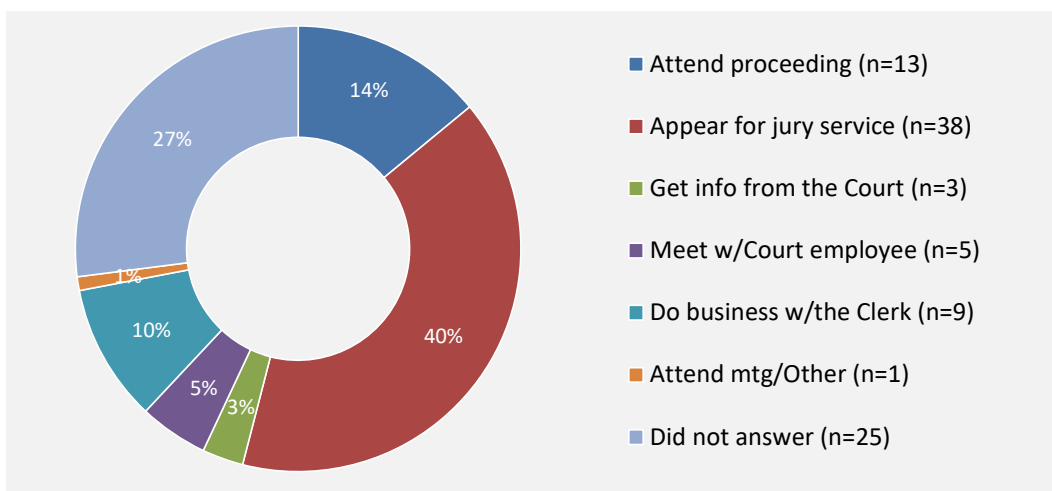


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**Court Users:**  
By Primary Purpose for Doing Business with the Court Today (n=94; in percentages)

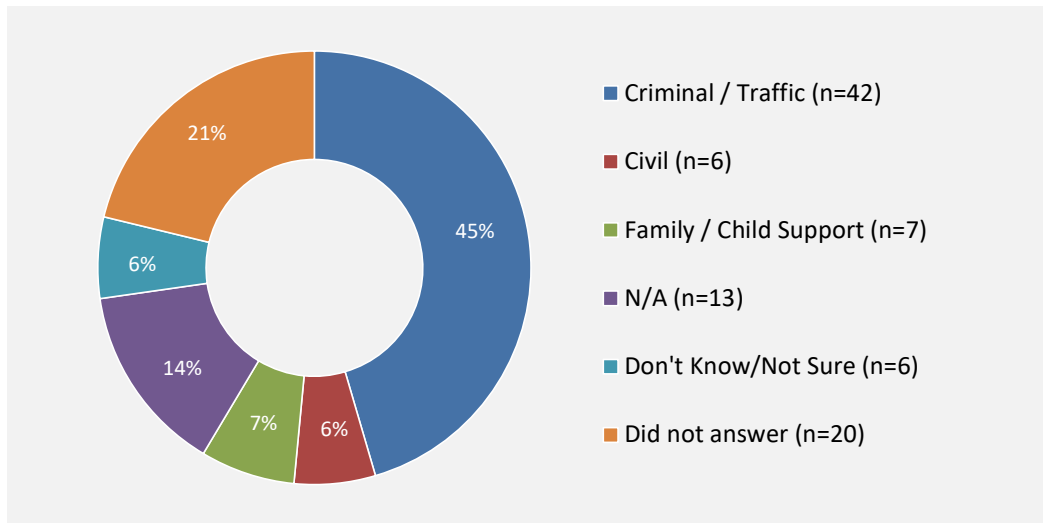


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**Court Users:**  
By Type of Legal Matter Involved In (n=94; in percentages)

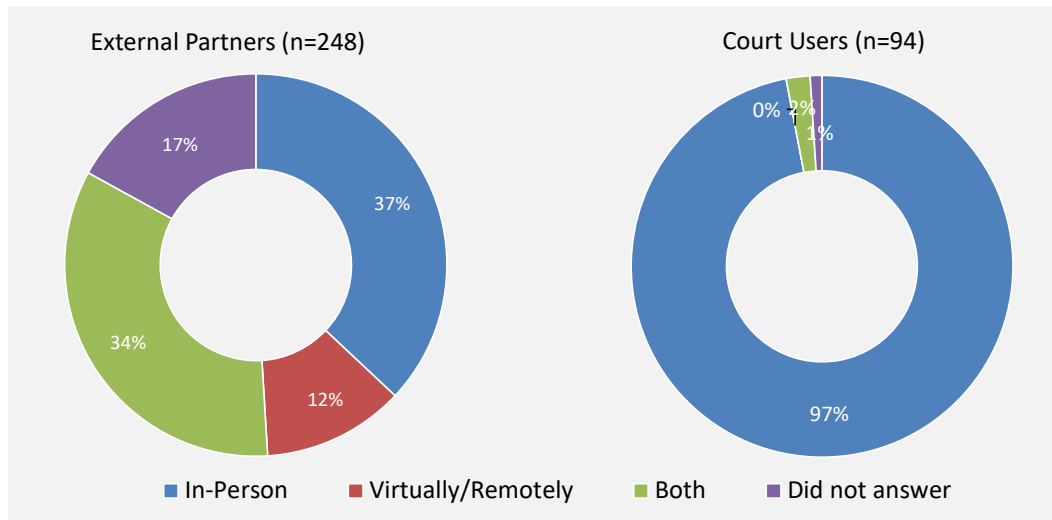


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**External Partners & Court Users:**  
By How Primarily Interacted with the Court / Conducted Court Business  
(in percentages)<sup>1</sup>

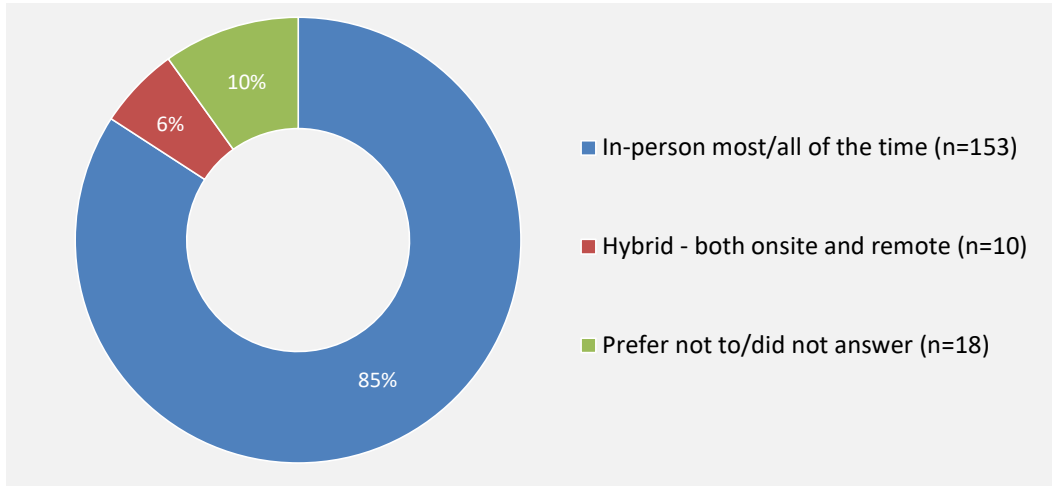


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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**Judicial Officers / Court Employees:**  
By Current Work Arrangement (n=181; in percentages)

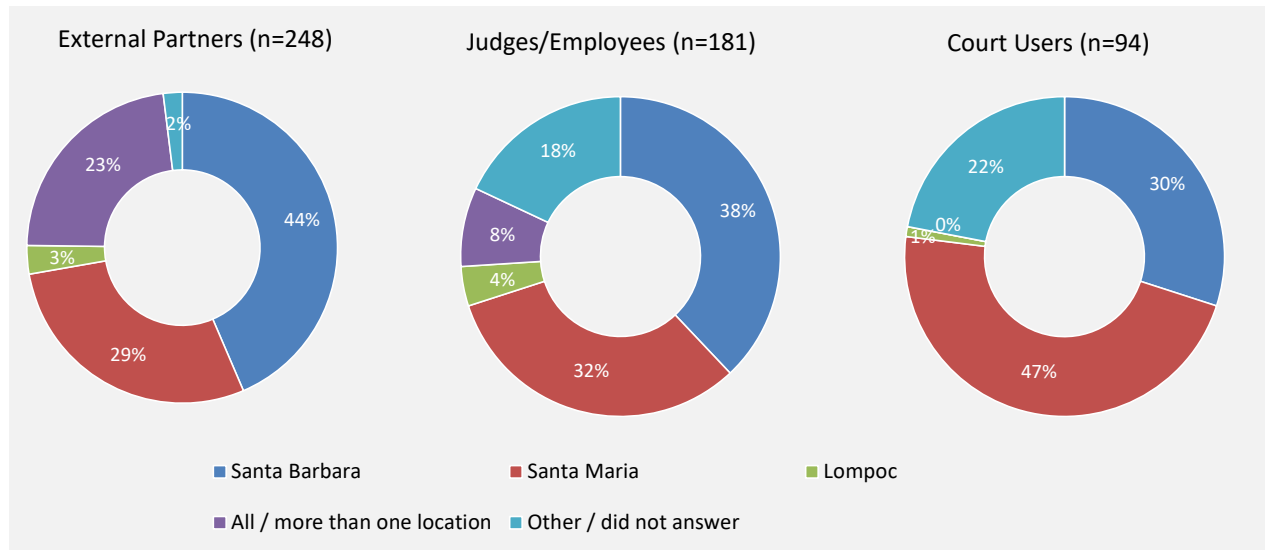


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

23

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**All Survey Respondents:**  
By Court Location / Primary Work Location (in percentages)

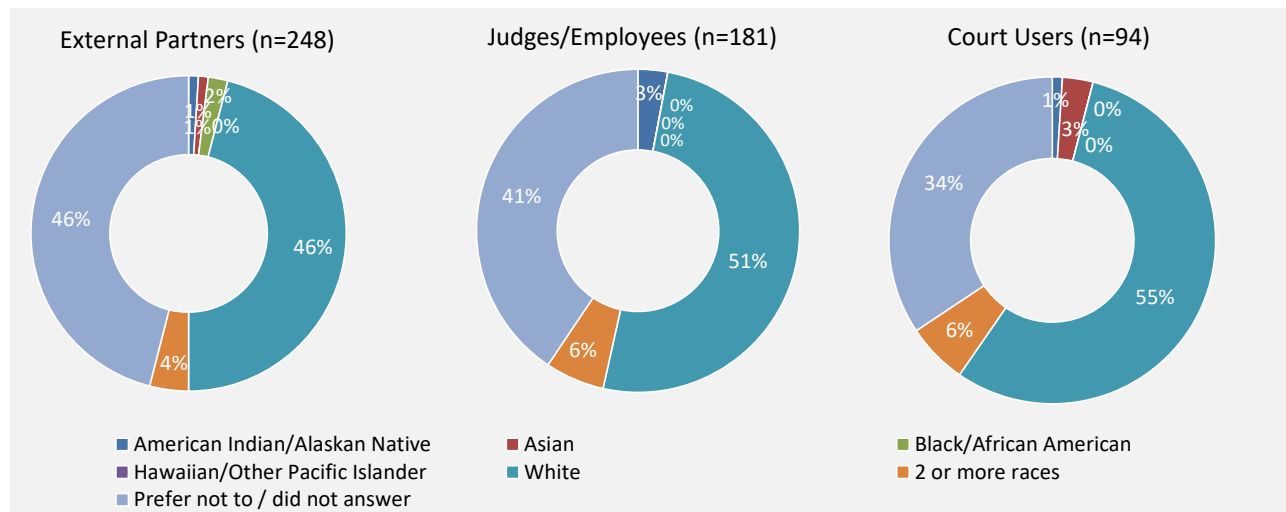


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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### All Survey Respondents: By Race<sup>1</sup>(in percentages)



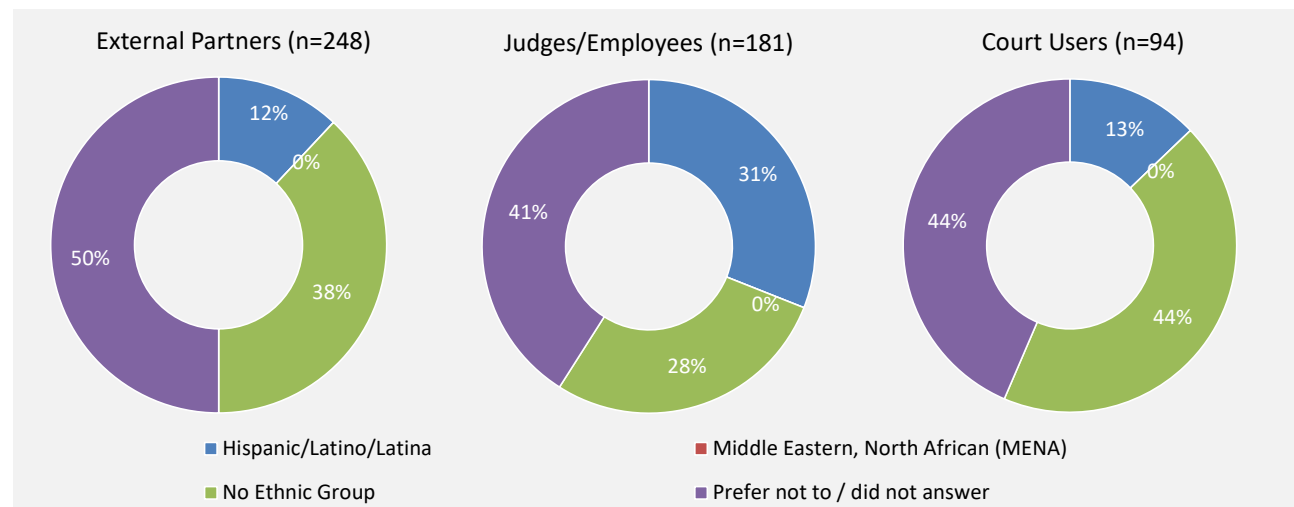
<sup>1</sup> The racial composition of Santa Barbara County according to the US Census Bureau (2022) is: 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 6% Asian; 2% Black African American; 0% Hawaiian / Pacific Islander; 85% White; 4% 2 or more races.

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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### All Survey Respondents: By Ethnicity<sup>1</sup> (in percentages)



<sup>1</sup> The US Census Bureau, by Executive Order, is beginning to capture data on MENA ethnicity. It is not collected currently. The Hispanic/Latino/Latina ethnicity stats for the US, California, and Santa Barabara County as of 2022 are: 19%, 40%, and 48% respectively.

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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## RESULTS & FINDINGS

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### Q1: Highest Priorities: Most Needed Changes in the Next 3-5 Years

External Partners & Judges/Employees

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## Q1: Improvements/changes MOST needed to the Court; the highest priorities in the next 3-5 years? *(Each was rated using a 10-point priority scale)*

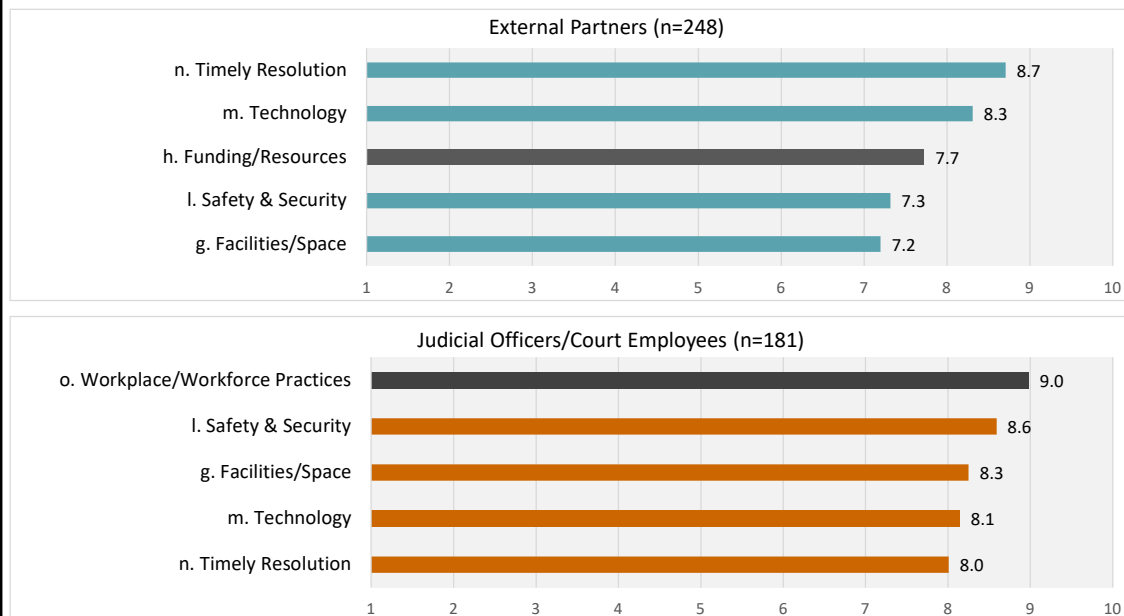
Below are the descriptions that were included on the survey. Refer to this list to understand the results (presented on subsequent slides).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Access (physical and virtual)</u>: improve physical and virtual access to the court; eliminate barriers ensuring access for all people</li> <li>b. <u>Community-Based Programs/Services</u>: collaborate w/partners to enhance and expand community/social service programs &amp; services</li> <li>c. <u>Court Programs</u>: evaluate, realign, &amp;/or augment court services/programs for youth, families, and other court users</li> <li>d. <u>Court User Assistance</u>: enhance or expand personal &amp; virtual assistance provided to court users</li> <li>e. <u>Equity and Fair Treatment</u>: ensure all people are treated fairly; eliminate practices that disadvantage any persons or groups</li> <li>f. <u>External Relations</u>: strengthen relations with external partners &amp; stakeholders</li> <li>g. <u>Facilities/Space</u>: improve facilities; modernize or repurpose existing space; reduce or expand footprint as needed; improve maintenance and cleaning</li> <li>h. <u>Funding/Resources</u>: pursue adequate funding/resources to meet existing &amp; evolving needs of the public &amp; to operate efficiently &amp; effectively; realign/reallocate existing resources</li> <li>i. <u>Juror Improvements/Participation</u>: increase the diversity &amp; inclusiveness of juries; increase participation rates; improve the juror experience</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>j. <u>Public Education</u>: educate the public about the judicial branch &amp; the court</li> <li>k. <u>Public Trust</u>: build trust &amp; confidence of the public in the court/justice system</li> <li>l. <u>Safety/Security</u>: ensure the personal safety (health, physical) of all who work in/use the courthouses; improve security</li> <li>m. <u>Technology</u>: invest in/use existing &amp; future technologies that will enhance access, services, &amp; court operations; enhance cyber &amp; data security</li> <li>n. <u>Timely Resolution</u>: ensure the timely resolution of all legal matters; reduce backlogs, wait times, &amp; unnecessary delay; improve scheduling &amp; case mgt practices; normalize procedures/practices for conducting in-person &amp; virtual court proceedings &amp; for providing virtual court services</li> <li>o. <u>Workplace/Workforce Practices</u>: modernize human resource, management, &amp; workplace policies, &amp; practices (e.g., transform recruitment, hiring &amp; retention practices; prioritize employee wellbeing; refine/ expand / implement hybrid or flexible work arrangements; provide training, development, &amp; career growth/ advancement opportunities; provide competitive pay &amp; benefits; implement equitable practices; build an inclusive, welcoming, and engaging culture)</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

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## Q1: Most Needed Improvements/Changes (Highest Priorities) in the Next 3-5 Years Top 5 – Comparison of External Partners & Judges/Employees (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



4 of the top 5 are the same for External Partners and Judges/Employees.

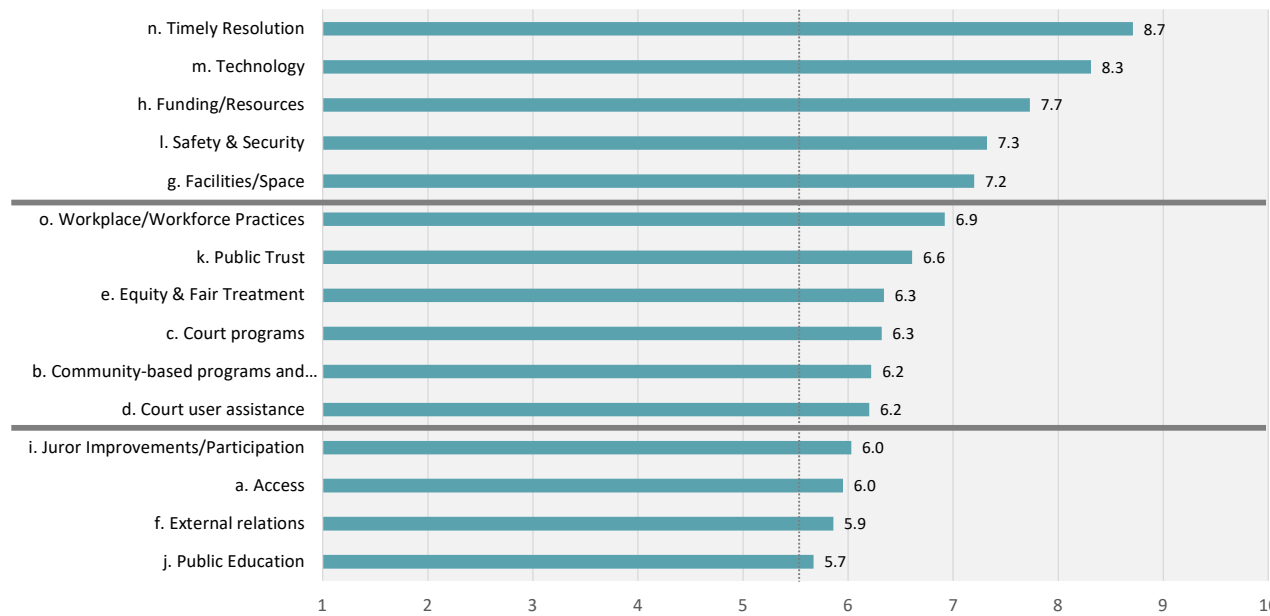
The gray/black bars show the 1 that is different between the 2 groups.

<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 10-point priority rating scale. The higher the mean score, the higher the priority.

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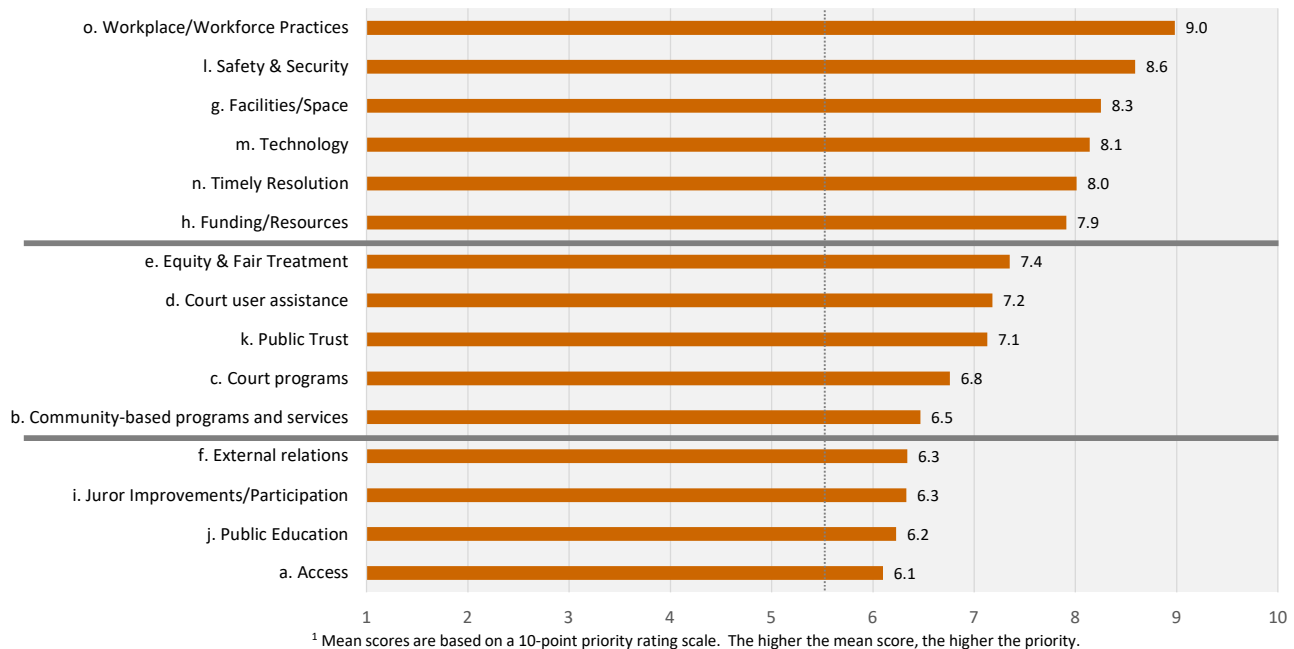
**Q1: Most Needed Improvements/Changes (Highest Priorities) in the Next 3-5 Years:**  
**External Partners - Highest to Lowest (n=248; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)**



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**Q1: Most Needed Improvements/Changes (Highest Priorities) in the Next 3-5 Years**  
**Judicial Officers/Employees - Highest to Lowest (n=181; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)**

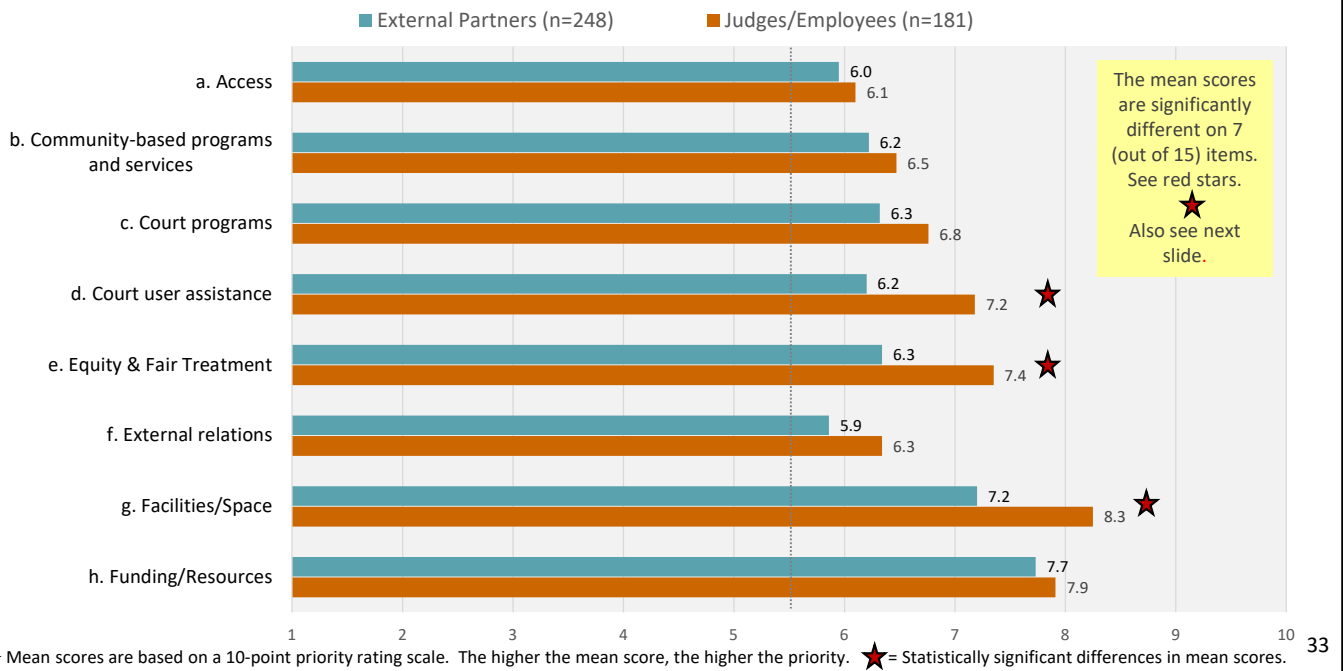


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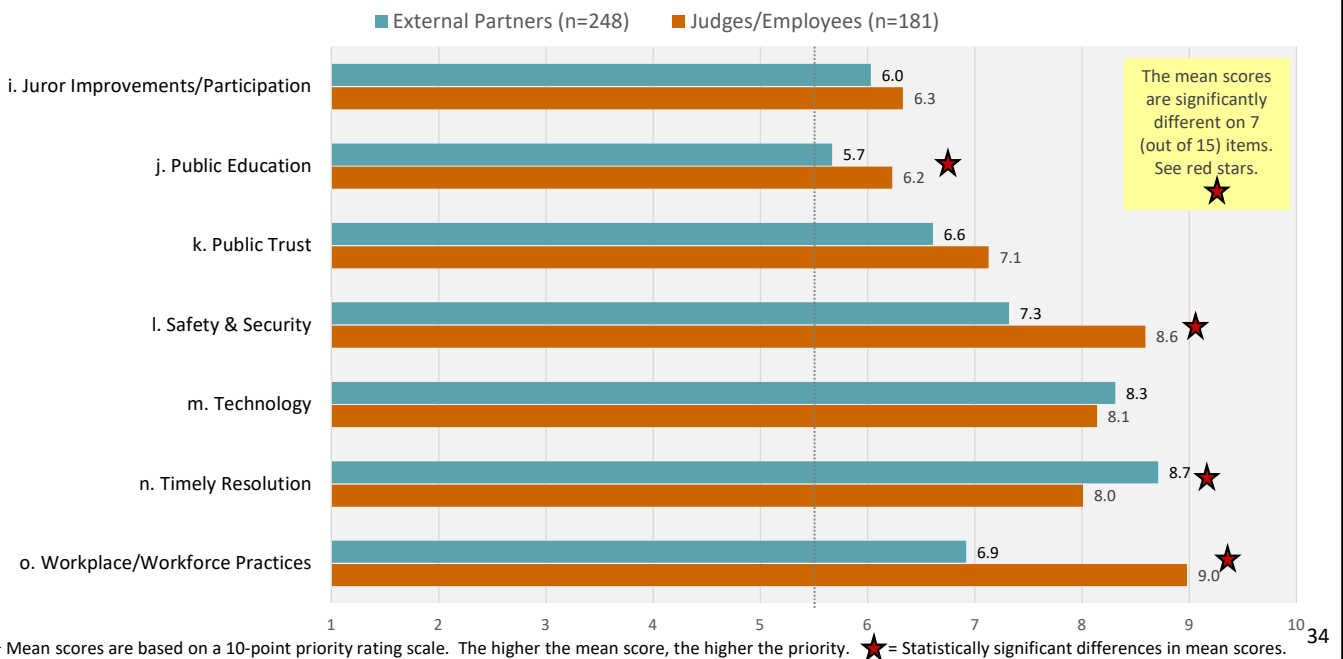


### Q1: Most Needed Improvements/Changes (Highest Priorities) in the Next 3-5 Years: Comparison of External Partners & Judicial Officers/Employees (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>) – Page 1



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### Q1: Most Needed Improvements/Changes (Highest Priorities) in the Next 3-5 Years: Comparison of External Partners & Judicial Officers/Employees (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>) – Page 2



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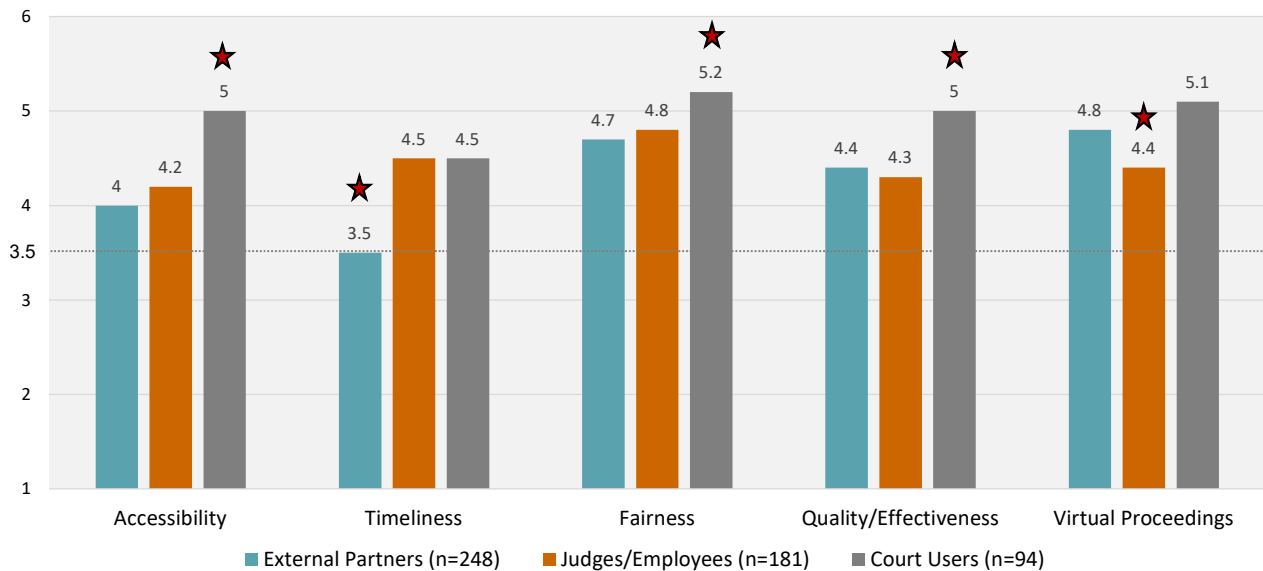
## Q2: Court Performance Categories / Court User Experience

External Partners, Court Users, and  
Judges/ Employees

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**2024 - Court Performance Categories / Court User Experience**  
(By External Partners, Judges/Employees, and Court Users in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

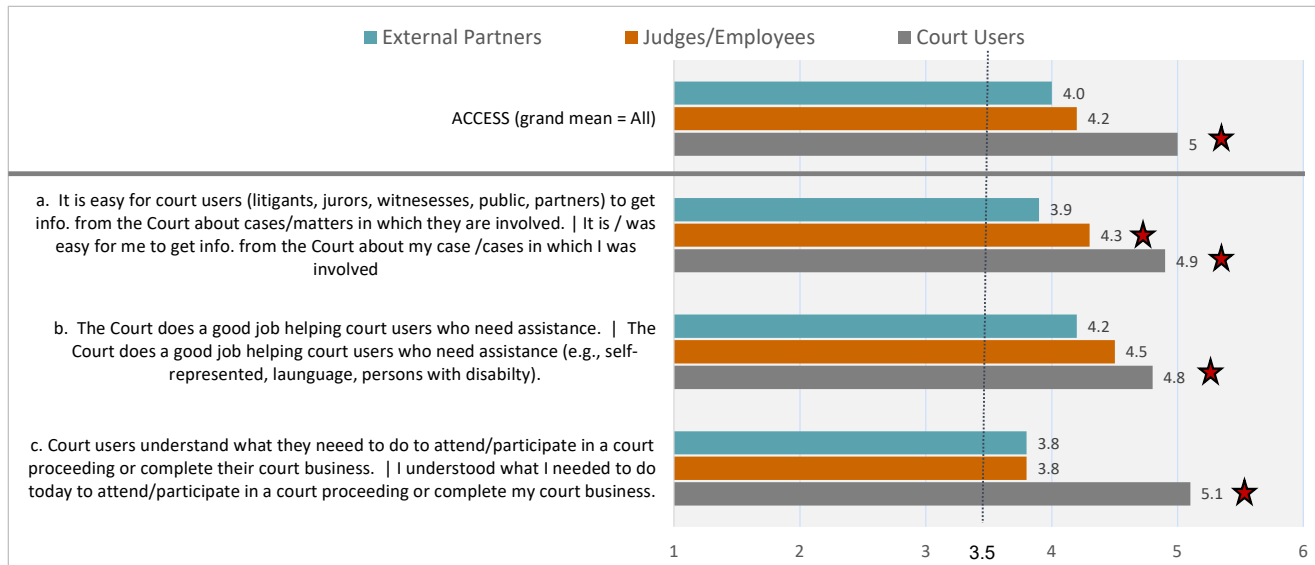
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## ACCESSIBILITY

### By Question (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience) (in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

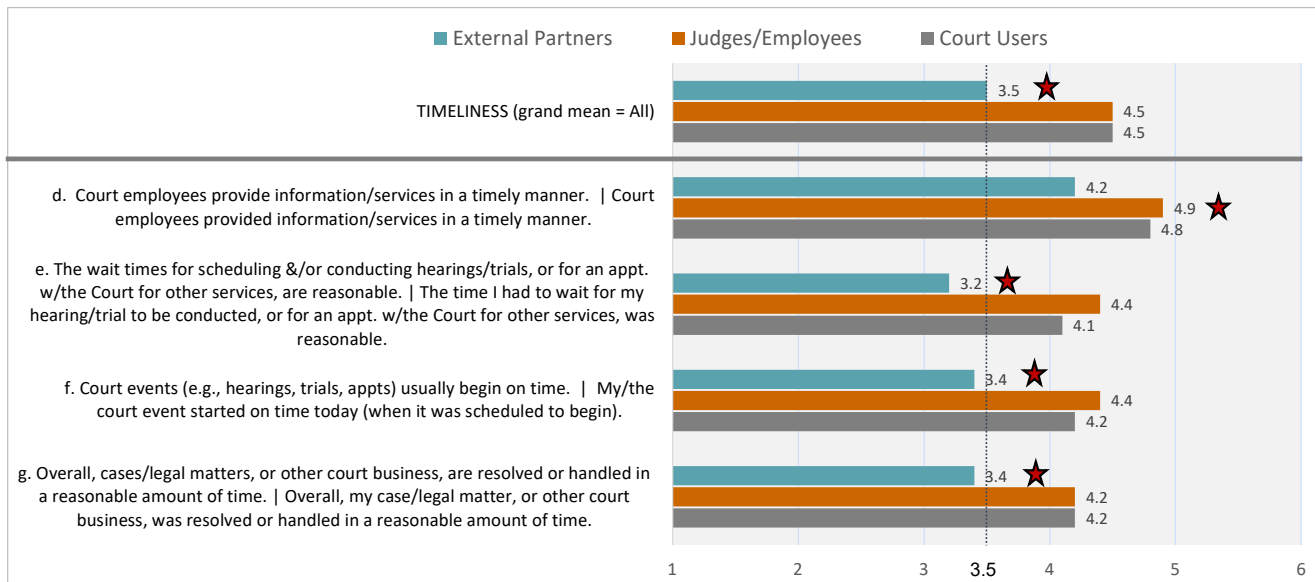
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## TIMELINESS

### By Question (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience) (in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

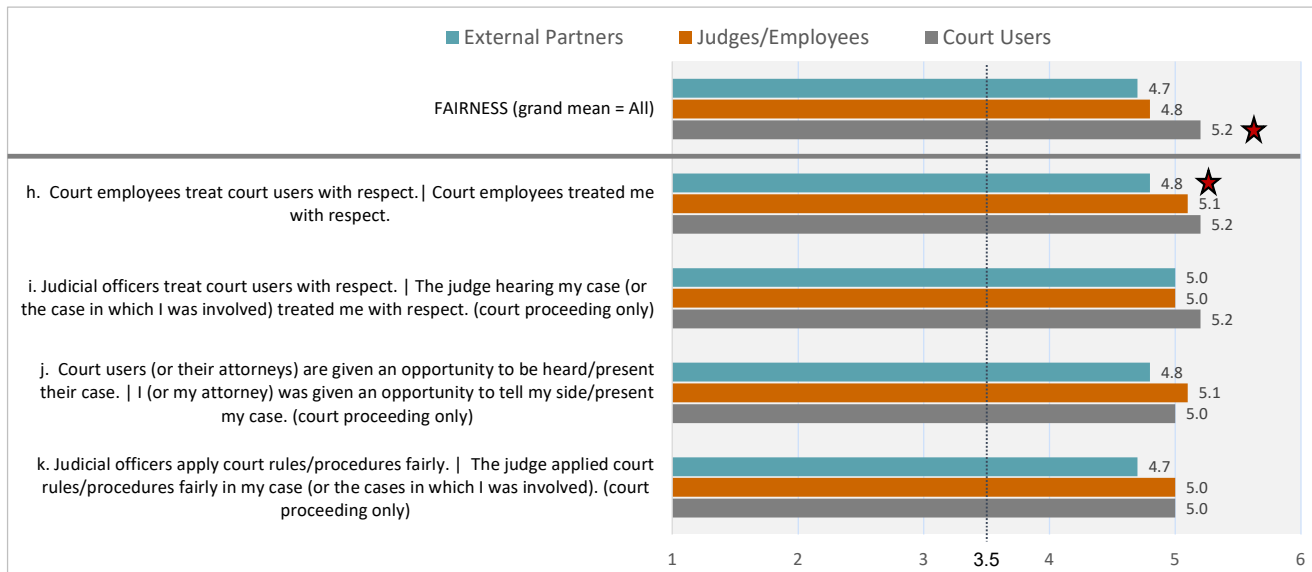
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## FAIRNESS

By Question - [Page 1](#) (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience)  
(in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

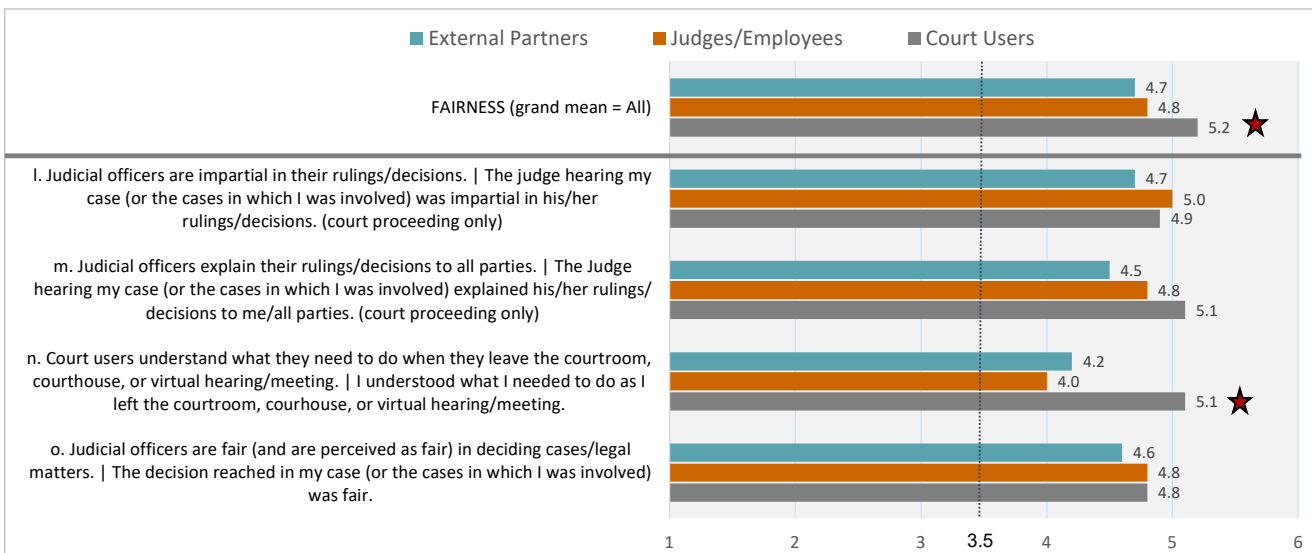
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## FAIRNESS

By Question - [Page 2](#) (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience)  
(in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

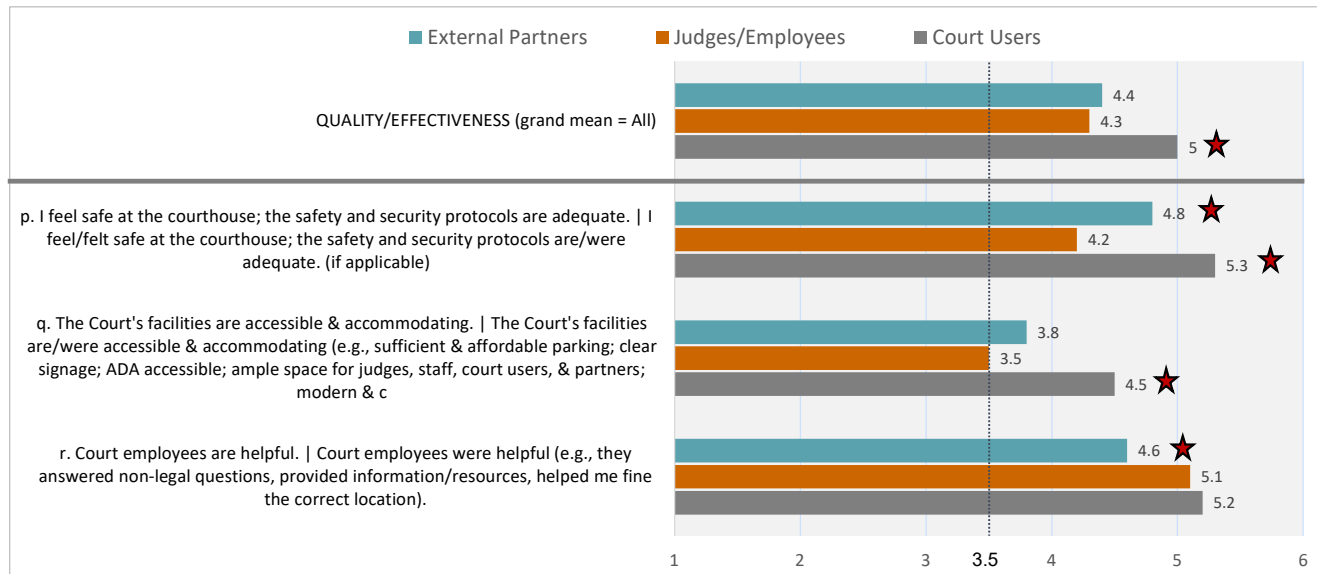
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

40

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## QUALITY/EFFECTIVENESS

### By Question (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience) (in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

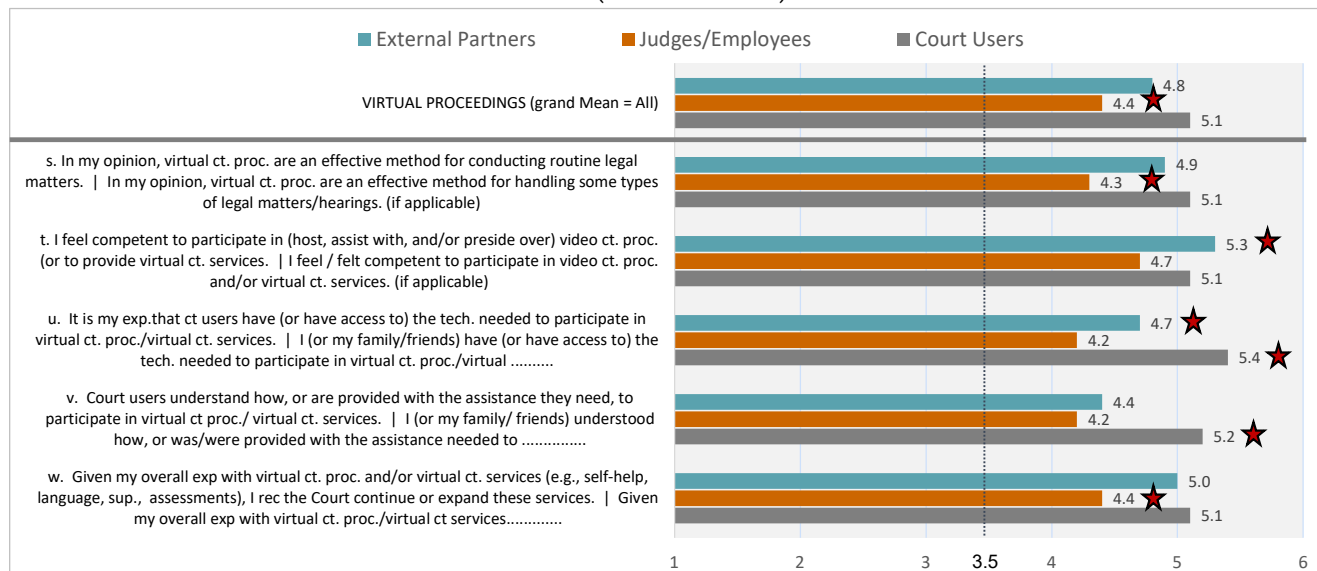
★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## VIRTUAL PROCEEDINGS

### By Question (Court Performance Category/Court User Experience) (in means scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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## Additional Findings – Statistically Significant Differences EXTERNAL PARTNERS – By Relationship to the Court

### 1. ACCESSIBILITY

- ✓ **Public attorney respondents** rated the access questions significantly **lower** than private attorney and law enforcement respondents.

### 2. TIMELINESS

- ✓ **Private attorney respondents** gave significantly **higher** ratings than public attorney and law enforcement respondents on most of the timeliness questions.

### 3. FAIRNESS

- ✓ **Public attorney respondents** gave significantly **lower** ratings than private attorney and law enforcement respondents on the fairness questions.

### 4. QUALITY / EFFECTIVENESS

- ✓ The grand mean of **private attorney respondents** (for this set of questions) was significantly **higher** than those of public attorney and law enforcement respondents.

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## Additional Findings – Statistically Significant Differences EXTERNAL PARTNERS – By Relationship to the Court

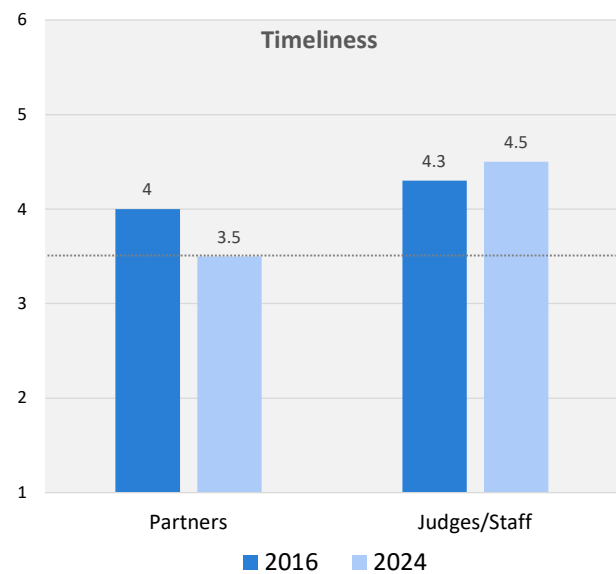
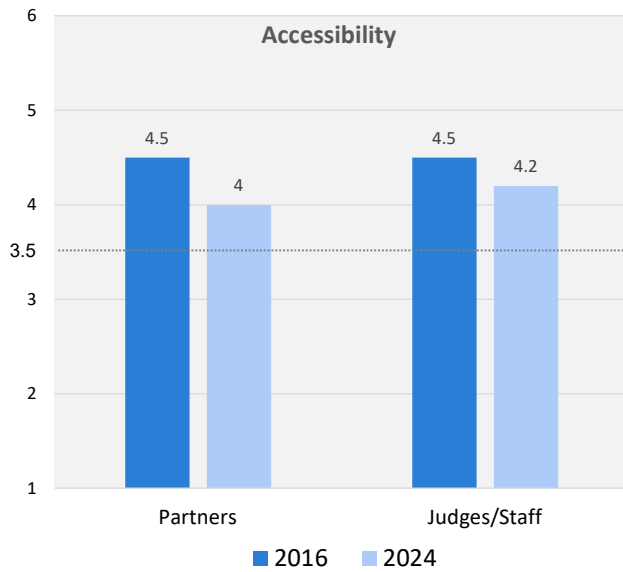
### 5. VIRTUAL PROCEEDINGS

- ✓ **Private attorney respondents** rated this set of questions significantly **higher** than public attorney and law enforcement respondents.
- ✓ **Law enforcement respondents** rated the question about feeling competent to participate in video court proceedings significantly **lower** than public and private attorneys.
- ✓ **Public attorney respondents** rated the question about court users understanding how, or receiving the assistance needed, to participate in virtual court proceedings significantly **lower** than private attorneys and law enforcement respondents.

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### 2016 & 2024 Comparison – Court Performance Categories External Partners and Judges/Employees (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



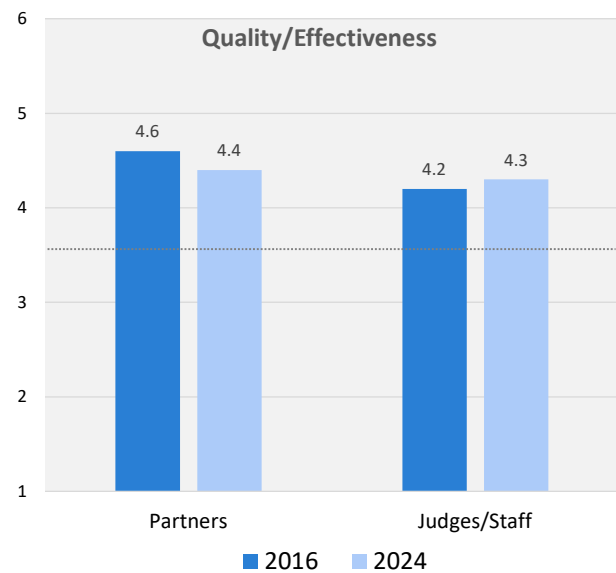
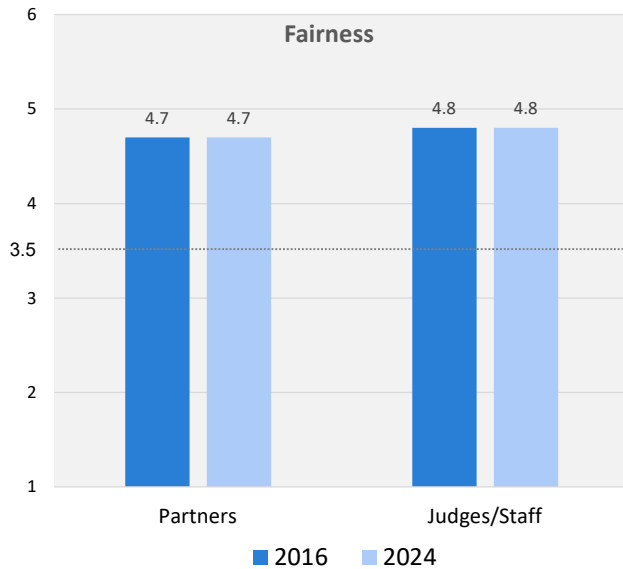
<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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### 2016 & 2024 Comparison – Court Performance Categories External Partners and Judges/Employees (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale. The higher the mean score, the more positive the rating.

★ = Statistically significant differences in mean scores.

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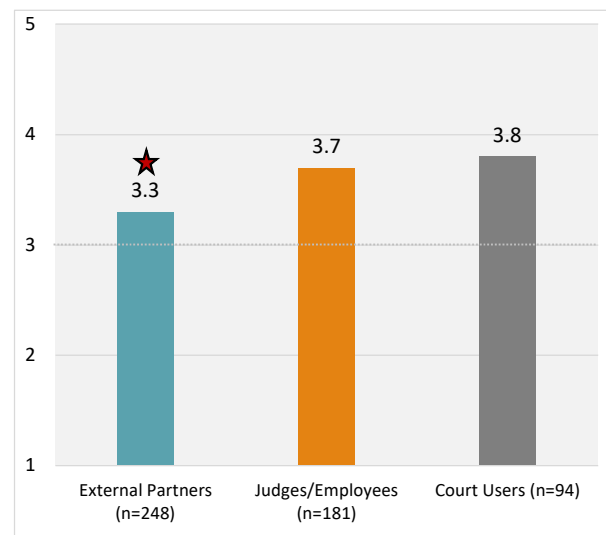
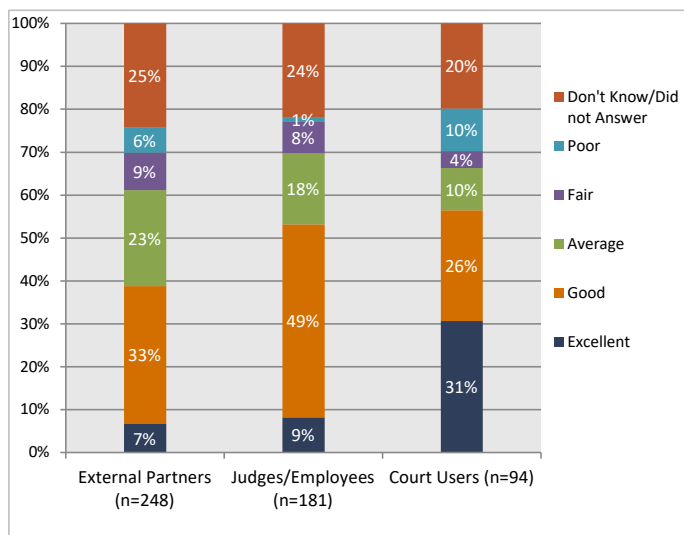
## Q3: Overall Court Performance

External Partners, Court Users, and  
Judges/ Employees

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### Santa Barbara Superior Court - Ratings on Overall Performance the Past 1 – 2 Years Comparison of External Partners, Judges/Employees, and Court Users (in percentages and mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding. Mean scores are based on a 5-point rating scale: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = Average, 2 = Fair, 1 = Poor. 3.0 is the midpoint of the rating scale. ★ = statistically significant differences in means scores.

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## Additional Findings – Statistically Significant Differences EXTERNAL PARTNERS – By Relationship to the Court

### 5. OVERALL COURT PERFORMANCE

- ✓ **Private attorney respondents** rated the Court significantly **higher** on overall performance than public attorney and law enforcement respondents.

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## Q: Additional Suggestions/Comments Court Users - Summary (not in priority order)

1. **Juror Experience:**
  - a. The parking lot was full; it was not clear where we were supposed to park; adjacent parking was lacking; need to resolve the lack of parking.
  - b. Jurors had to stand (for 1 – 2 hours) in a cramped area waiting during breaks – proper seating is needed for everyone and especially for elderly and/or disabled; people were sitting on the floor and stairs; restrooms need more servicing.
  - c. The jury process was inefficient – nothing started on time, had to stand for long periods of time in cramped hallways, there was no soap in bathrooms, instructions were confusing, information was inconsistent, time was wasted and experienced lost wages.
  - d. The jury selection process was antiquated, tedious, and needs to be overhauled – reduce wait times and improve the juror experience.
  - e. Make the jury experience more efficient – questionnaires could be completed in advance, reduce wait times, streamline the process and start in the morning, reduce the time it takes to get through security (it took everyone over an hour to get through security).
  - f. A lot of time is wasted, there are excessive delays – be more efficient; started late/ended early - be more respectful of the time of people do civic duty.
  - g. It would have been helpful to have written information about the jury process.
  - h. Court dates should be on the jury service website.
  - i. The judge used our names and towns where we live in front of a defendant accused of gun violence – safety is a concern.
  - j. Communication to/with jurors is poor – didn't receive notice/email of cancellation until 4 hours later – communications should be more timely.
2. **Positive Service Experiences:** Vikki in traffic was amazing – helpful, kind, understanding; Max (at security – front) was kind and helpful; my issues were easy to resolve – staff were helpful and professional; everyone was professional – my experience reinforced my faith in our legal system; Christine in the records dept. was professional, kind, and had strong customer service / people skills – grateful to her for her assistance; courthouse staff and officials were kind, professional, respectful, and helpful; court facility is beautiful with a rich history.
3. **Negative Service Experiences:** I was denied entry into the building because of a selfie stick – there was no place to leave it while I toured the building so was not able to enter; seating is uncomfortable, falling apart, and too cramped for legs; some deputies were rude; the lighting in the hallways is dark/needs to be lighter; the self-help office was not open during the posted hours; extend the hours offices are open - public not able to do business.
4. **Fairness / Timeliness:** (positive) everyone worked to ensure we have a fair justice system and safe facility; the judge was fair minded; (negative) my case has languished for over 8 months – it is not fair.

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## Q4: Court of the Future

External Partners and Judges/Employees

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### Q4: Court of the Future: Innovative Ideas/Goals the Court Should Pursue External Partners – Themes/Summary of Comments – Page 1 (not in order of priority)

1. **Access/Services:** expand self-help center and family law facilitator's office; provide additional videos to instruct pro per's; expand online access to case information for court users and attorneys; improve access for non-English / LEP court users; provide more online and virtual services; expand office hours – ensure offices are open the entire day; simplify forms and procedures; expedite access to records – should be online/improve search engine; provide more digital access, resources, and information; provide easier access to public documents; work with partners to address transportation issues to court and from jail; work to improve the user experience.
2. **Court Programs/Treatment Options:** expand behavioral health services (onsite clinicians); collaborate with community partners to provide needed services (e.g., housing, education, employment, treatment); use more alternative sentencing options; expand diversion and provide programming for non-violent drug and mental health offenders; implement CARE Court; need more and better treatment options; expand mediation services; improve the landlord tenant mediation program; expand advocate teams/support system for those involved in the justice system.
3. **Virtual Proceedings/Consistent Practices:** expand virtual / Zoom court hearings and calendars (for in custody defendants and out of custody court users); implement consistent practices between the north and south – expand virtual proceedings for routine matters and use consistent procedures (some judges in the north require in-person for all matters); allow law enforcement to appear virtually for short/routine matters; close Lompoc Court or make all hearings virtual (it's an inconvenience to have to appear in-person in Lompoc and then have to travel to Santa Maria); Lompoc felony cases end up in Santa Maria eventually); eliminate Zoom / virtual proceedings in criminal.
4. **Timely Resolution/ Fairness/ Case Management:** better/more efficient scheduling is needed (e.g., schedule in custody at a certain time and out of custody at a different time; move to on-time scheduling); reduce wait times – I was told to appear at 8:30 and I am still waiting in the afternoon; have to wait months to schedule law and motion hearings in South County – reduce the wait times; reduce wait between filing motions and hearing dates); reduce backlogs; hold judicial officers accountable for timely and fair resolution of cases (cases are not resolved in a timely manner anymore – cases are continued daily – cases drag on unnecessarily); improve notifications for courtroom hearings; add night court as an option (could be virtual for some case types); reduce number of continuance / set firm trial dates to reduce delay (i.e., hold attorneys accountable for delays); streamline processes/ procedures countywide; treat indigent litigants fairly; be more transparent on rulings; judges need to manage cases more effectively; the juror process needs to be more efficient – a lot of time is wasted – the Court is not very respectful of jurors' time.

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**Q4: Court of the Future: Innovative Ideas/Goals the Court Should Pursue**  
**External Partners – Themes/Summary of Comments – Page 2 (not in order of priority)**

5. **Technology:** upgrade technology in courtrooms (e.g., TVs to play evidence for jurors; all courtrooms should have same top of the line technology); move to electronic exhibits/go paperless; provide efilng for all cases; improve or replace Odyssey / case management system; modernize technology countywide; modernize online case portal; be proactive in making technology improvements; use technology to assist with efficiency and scheduling; more reliable/quicker Internet/wi-fi; evaluate and use AI where possible; integrate systems – Court, DA, PD, etc.; use digital subpoena process for law enforcement agencies.
6. **Staffing Levels/Workforce Issues:** ensure adequate staffing levels to meet service needs/keep offices open and staffed; provide more work from home/ job sharing opportunities; provide more training to new employees; provide a better working environment for employees; provide competitive pay and benefits to employees; work to resolve staffing shortages – interpreters and court reporters.
7. **Relationships with Partners:** strengthen relationships with justice system partners (e.g., law enforcement agencies, bar); need more real time/ better communication with partners; explore new/innovative partnerships – local law school; collaborate with partners to develop mutually beneficial solutions to common justice system problems (e.g., reduce backlogs, scheduling, delay, virtual appearances, etc.); reach out to / collaborate with the bar.
8. **Facilities, Security, Parking:** clean, repair, update courthouses; resolve flooding issues; improve parking and security (provide secure and free parking); strengthen physical security and courtroom security; refurbish/repurpose space (including juror rooms); improve signage for court departments; facilities are old, outdated – plan for a new, modern, more effective courthouses; provide a separate stand-by room for officers waiting to testify or allow for virtual testimony; make all court facilities more appealing (less depressing); need a new courthouse and strengthen parking and security in Santa Maria and Lompoc; Lompoc facility is substandard – improvements are needed.
9. **Miscellaneous:** better public safety/secure handling of in-custody defendants – they should not be walked across the street (develop a better system – minimize the movement of prisoners between facilities); provide bias training for all involved in the justice system – DAs, Attorneys, Judges, law enforcement; need more diversity on the bench; provide space/lockers for homeless people / others to leave items when attending or visiting the Court; add dedicated family law departments.

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**Q4: Court of the Future: Innovative Ideas/Goals the Court Should Pursue**  
**Judicial Officers/Employees – Themes/Summary of Comments – Page 1 (not in priority order)**

**Service/Externally Focused Suggestions**

1. **Access/Services:** we need consistent clerk window and court hours; improve online access (re: case status, court and case information); implement user-friendly ways to access information and services; put kiosks in clerk's / other offices; more onsite / virtual free legal assistance; improve ability to conduct court business online and virtually; improve / expand attorney portal; enhance self-help services; improve website - pay online, complete fillable forms, add court user "how to" videos; improve online presence; put Zooms kiosks in high traffic areas (in communities, at facilities, etc.).
2. **Court Programs/Treatment Options:** more ADR in Solvang and Santa Maria; focus on/ expand mental health, substance use, and domestic violence programs.
3. **Virtual Proceedings/Consistent Practices:** permanent Zoom options for court appearances; stop use of Zoom in criminal; do away with Zoom appearances – it is difficult to communicate with individuals on Zoom.
4. **Timely Resolution/ Fairness/ Case Management:** reallocate resources to promote timely resolution; rethink current calendaring system to improve judicial workloads and assignments; create consistent work processes / procedures; implement digital minute orders – stop doing hand-written orders; develop a better approach to judicial rotations; reduce the number of continuances – implement a uniform / courtwide continuance policy.
5. **Technology:** use technology to help with staff shortages; use modern solutions/technology to improve workflow; use AI to help with workload and customer service; update technology; automate repetitive tasks; go paperless; improve Zoom technology.
6. **Facilities, Security, Parking:** expand parking, improve / modernize facilities and office space; need a new building; clean and maintain building/space; better use of space in Santa Barbara – rid out storage boxes, furniture, etc.; need a new north county facility; close Lompoc courthouse; clean jury room / seats – improve experience of / comfort for jurors; need a new Anacapa building.
7. **Miscellaneous:** continue to seek adequate funding/resources; raise juror per diem; need a better system for walking defendants / prisoners to criminal courthouse; use data analytics / data scientists to make good administrative/operational decisions; outreach to communities; hold regular bench bar meetings; educate the public.

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**Q4: Court of the Future: Innovative Ideas/Goals the Court Should Pursue**  
**Judicial Officers/Employees – Themes/Summary of Comments – Page 2 (not in priority order)**

**Workplace/Workforce Improvements**

8. **Training / Advancement Opportunities:** provide more training for staff / increase training opportunities; provide active shooter training; give staff opportunities to learn Spanish; provide more computer / web safety courses; provide equal training opportunities for all employees; cross-train employees; more access to training and opportunities for advancement; create in-house training opportunities.
9. **Employee Morale/Flexible Work Environment:** improve morale; do team building – build/rebuild sense of connection and community; put a priority on employee wellbeing/work life balance; expand hybrid work/alternative hours (provide more work from home options, 9/80 work schedule); improve communication with employees; implement a reward/recognition program – value, appreciate, and be respectful to employees; improve / focus on employee engagement.
10. **HR/Management Practices:** train and invest in managers/supervisors; strengthen / modernize management practices (adopt modern day mindset, not command and control mindset); modernize recruitment and hiring practices; implement practices that attract and retain the best people; take disciplinary action when needed; retool onboarding for new hires; treat employees equitably across all divisions; implement an internship program.
11. **Pay / Benefits / Incentives:** provide competitive pay and benefits; provide a livable way; provide incentives for commuters.
12. **Miscellaneous:** provide stand up desks / improve office space and equipment.

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**Q5:**  
**Strength of the Workplace,  
 Court Culture, and  
 Satisfaction**

Employees Only

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### Employees Only: Strength of the Workplace, Culture, Job Satisfaction:

Indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement.

*Rate each question on a 6-point agreement scale\**

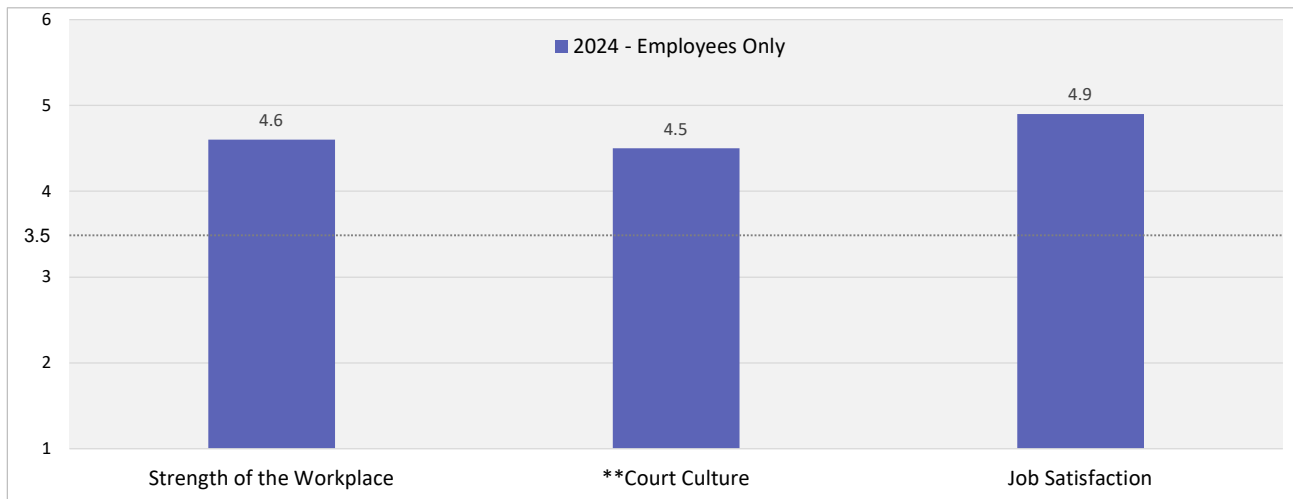
1. Employees answered additional questions in 3 areas: (a) Strength of the Workplace; (b) Communication, Connection, & Culture, and (c) Job Satisfaction.
2. Strength of the Workplace questions: 10 questions that measure key elements of employee engagement (i.e., what is needed to attract, focus, and retain the most talented employees.
  - According to longitudinal research conducted by the Gallup Organization, the strength of the workplace questions are positively correlated to *customer satisfaction, employee retention, and productivity*.
3. Communication, Connection, Culture: 6 questions that measure elements of communication, connection, belonging, and well-being.
4. Job Satisfaction: 1 question that measures overall satisfaction with work/job.
5. Organizations should strive for high mean scores (i.e., 5.0 or above) on these questions.

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### 2024 - Strength of the Workplace, Court Culture, Job Satisfaction

Employees ONLY (n=162; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



\*\* In 2016, the Court Culture category of questions included only 1 question about communication = feeling informed about what is going on at the Court. In 2023/2024, the Court Culture category included 5 questions about communication, connection, diversity, well-being, and belonging. See subsequent slides for details.

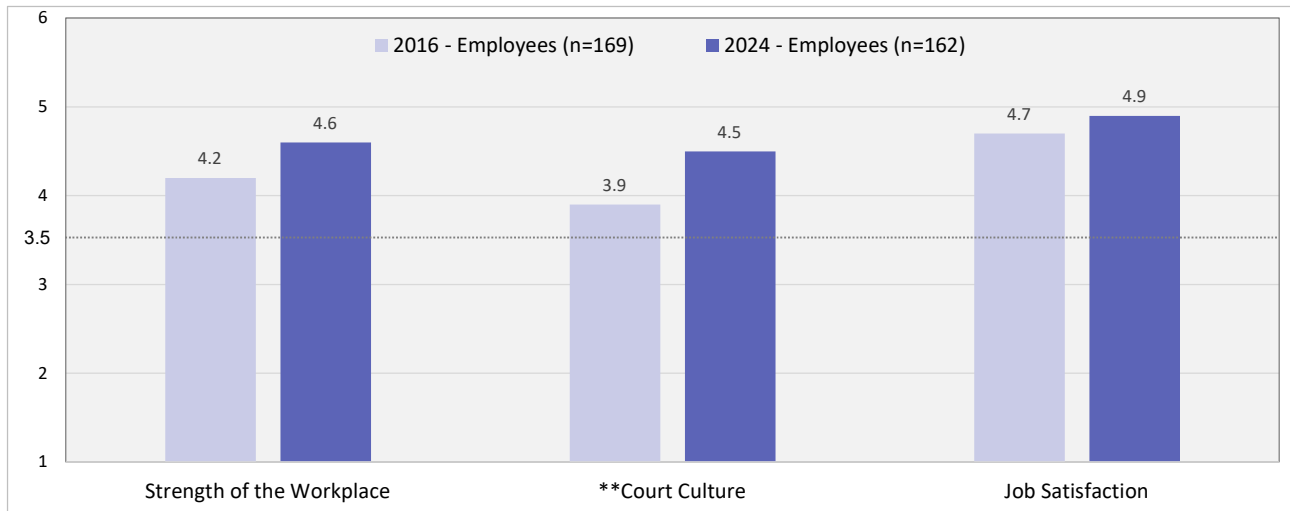
<sup>1</sup> Means are based on a 6-Point agreement rating scale = 6 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Agree; 4 = Agree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Somewhat; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree; and 0 = Don't Know/Not Sure.

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### 2016 & 2024 Comparison

#### Strength of the Workplace, Court Culture, Job Satisfaction – Employees ONLY (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)



\*\* In 2016, the Court Culture category of questions included only 1 question about communication = feeling informed about what is going on at the Court. In 2023/2024, the Court Culture category included 5 questions about communication, connection, diversity, well-being, and belonging. See subsequent slides for details.

<sup>1</sup> Means are based on a 6-Point agreement rating scale = 6 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Agree; 4 = Agree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Somewhat; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree; and 0 = Don't Know/Not Sure.

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### 2024 - Strength of the Workplace – Employees Only (n=162; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)

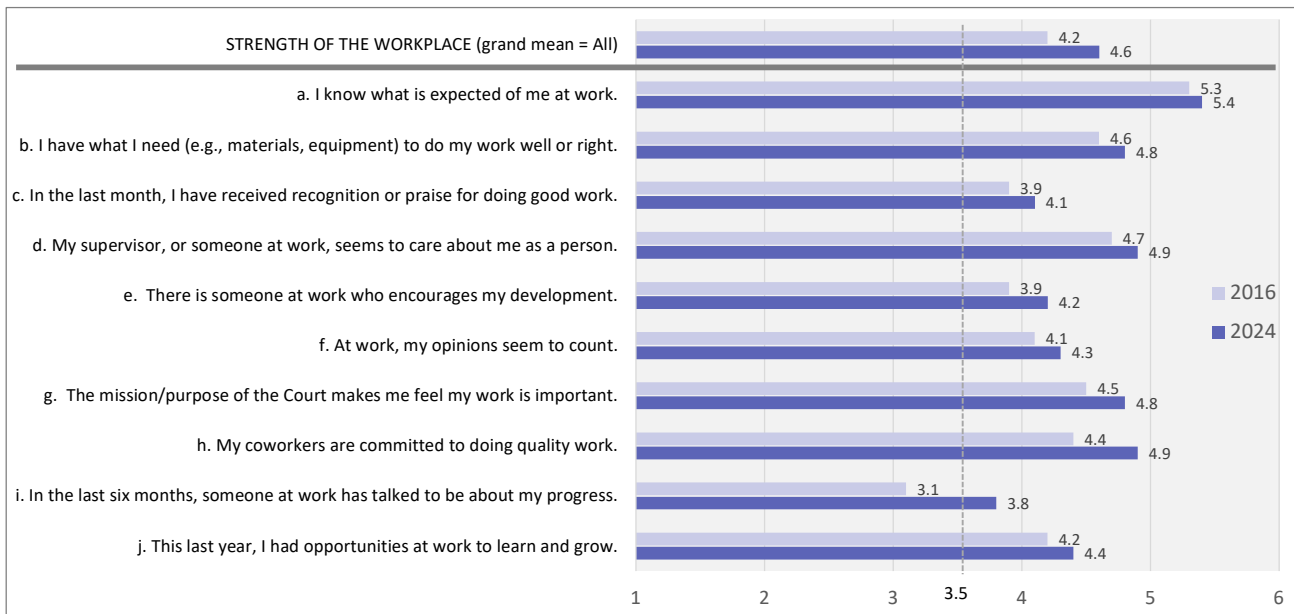


<sup>1</sup> Means are based on a 6-Point agreement rating scale = 6 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Agree; 4 = Agree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Somewhat; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree; and 0 = Don't Know/Not Sure.

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### 2016 & 2024 Comparison Strength of the Workplace - Employees Only - (in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)

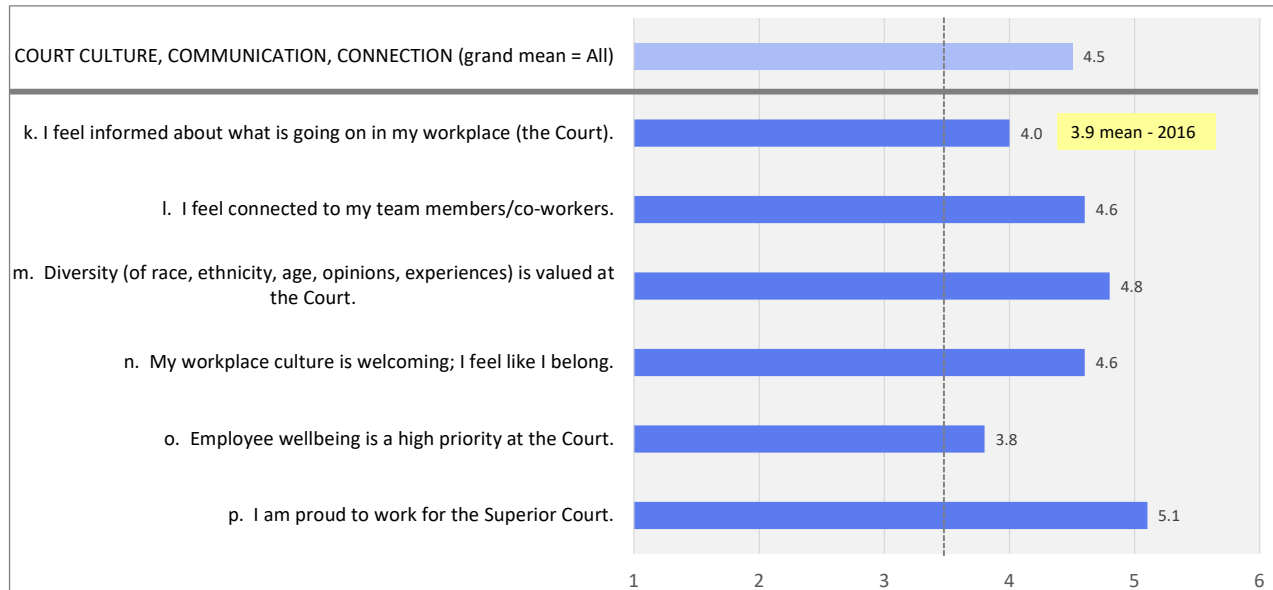


<sup>1</sup> Means are based on a 6-point agreement rating scale: 6 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Agree; 4 = Agree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Somewhat; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree; and 0 = Don't Know/Not Sure.

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### 2024 - Court Culture, Communication, and Connection – Employees Only (n=162; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)

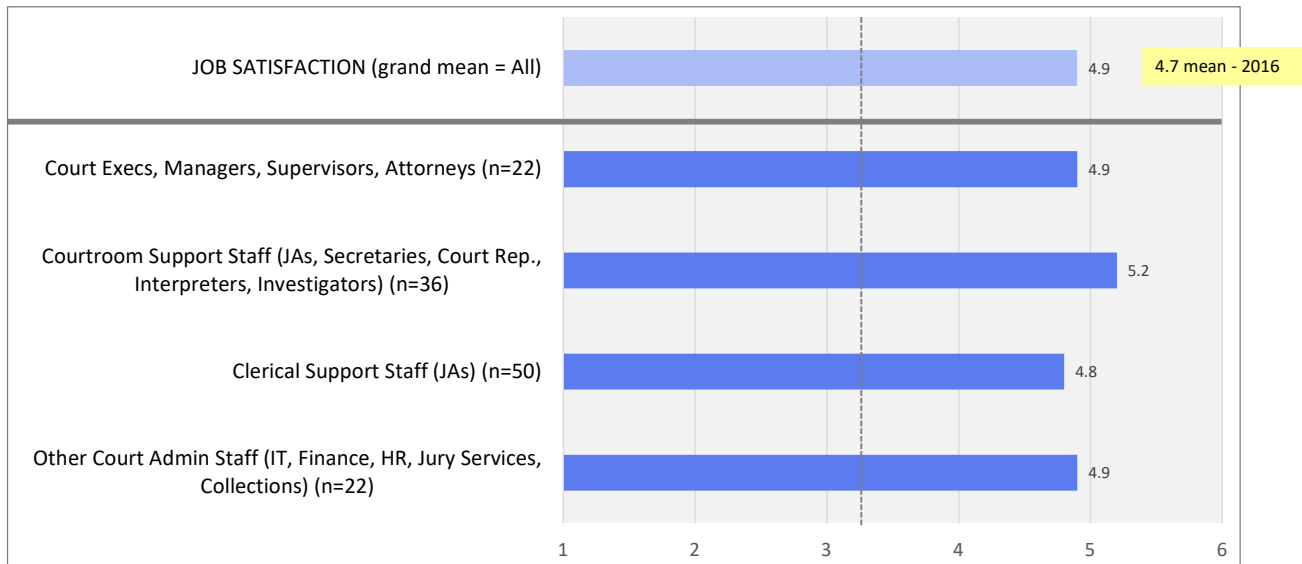


<sup>1</sup> Means are based on a 6-Point agreement rating scale = 6 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Agree; 4 = Agree Somewhat; 3 = Disagree Somewhat; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree; and 0 = Don't Know/Not Sure.

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**2024 - Job Satisfaction (Overall, I am satisfied with my job.)**  
**Employees Only – By Position/Employee Groups (n=160; in mean scores<sup>1</sup>)**



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**Q6:**  
**Suggestions for Making the Court a Better Place to Work**

Employees Only

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## Q6: Suggestions for Making the Court a More Diverse, Inclusive, Satisfying &/or Engagement Place to Work - **Employees Only** - Summary (not in priority order)

### Many suggestions were similar to preparing for a "Court of the Future:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide better training and cross training</li> <li>2. Provide more opportunities to advance/get promoted</li> <li>3. Provide higher/competitive pay, benefits, and incentives</li> <li>4. Retool recruitment and onboarding/new hire training</li> <li>5. Expand hybrid work options</li> <li>6. Connections: build / allow for relationship building with employees; introduce / meet new people; create a directory with pictures</li> <li>7. Build Morale: conduct team building; recognize / appreciate employees – conduct staff appreciation events; show employees you care; be respectful, kind, and compassionate; form a court morale committee to plan/hold events</li> <li>8. Customer Service: the public should see happy, compassionate, professional and kind staff serving them.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Improve Communication: keep employees informed; listen to / consider input from those who do the work; better communication from managers to supervisors</li> <li>10. HR / Management Practices: model positive attitudes / behaviors; hold everyone accountable for performance, being a team player, and positive attitude; less micromanaging; increase diversity of workforce – hire bilingual people, from different races and cultural backgrounds; discard old/antiquated county policies; provide feedback regular feedback; regular staff meetings</li> <li>11. Staffing Levels: some levels are inadequate for workload/demand; reallocate resources based on need/demand; balance workloads</li> <li>12. Technology: upgrade technology and equipment; continue to use new technologies to improve efficiency and service</li> <li>13. Facilities: improve facilities, office space, parking, safety/security</li> <li>14. Community: participate in local activities / events</li> </ol> |
|---|--|

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