



OFFICE OF THE
ADMINISTRATOR FOR
THE COURTS

STATE OF WASHINGTON

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WASHINGTON STATE JUDICIAL SURVEY

Final Report

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

It is believed the public's level of confidence in the legal system is related to their level of understanding about the system. Past research studies reveal the American public knows very little about the judicial branch of our government and therefore, has little confidence in the courts.

The Washington Courts and Community Committee is interested in exploring the awareness and confidence level of Washington State residents in regards to Washington courts. Ultimately, the information gathered will be used to develop curricula for judges that will be used to educate the general public, as well as educators and the media, about the role of the courts.

Both qualitative and quantitative research has been used to gather the awareness level and attitudes of Washington State residents in regards to Washington State courts. The qualitative phase consisted of a series of focus groups which were conducted in Seattle and Spokane in June, 1987. These focus groups were used for exploratory purposes, to help aid in the design of the quantitative phase of the research, and to gather in-depth responses regarding the public's awareness and attitudes. The results of the focus group research are summarized and presented under separate cover.

The quantitative phase of the research study consisted of a telephone survey among Washington State residents in January and February 1988. The sample gathered was designed to be representative of the population residing in Washington and provide the Washington Courts and Community Committee with data which can be projected to the population. The following report presents the findings of the quantitative phase of the research and offers conclusions and recommendations for further planning.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

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- To determine the present level of awareness, knowledge and understanding regarding the judicial system.
- To identify current and potential sources of information about the judicial system.
- To measure public support and confidence in the judicial system.
- To assess how well the public perceives the judicial system is performing and the basis for this perception.
- To identify key areas of concern regarding the judicial system.
- To define the degree of direct experience the public has with the legal system.
- To test the hypothesis that knowledge about the court system differentiates public opinion, attitudes and confidence.
- To better define strategies for increasing public understanding of the judicial system which may lead to less confusion and more confidence and support in the judicial system.
- To provide a baseline measurement of public awareness of and attitudes toward the judicial system to which future replications of the study can be compared and changes in awareness and attitudes tracked.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

Interview Technique

Computer-assisted telephone interviews were used to gather information from qualified respondents throughout the state of Washington.

The sample source was provided by Survey Sampling, Inc. and included a random telephone listing (including both listed and unlisted numbers) which was drawn proportionate to the population in Washington State.

Respondent Qualifications

- 18 years of age or older
- Resident of Washington State
- Individual, or other household members, is not employed in any of the following occupations:
 - Police or Fire Department
 - News media
 - Lawyer or employed in a law office
 - Judge, court employee or employed in another occupation
 - Teacher or educator who teaches about the legal or court system
- Individual, or other household members, has never been to law school

Sample Size

A total sample size of N=800 was collected

Time per Interview

The average length of interview is 24.8 minutes

Incidence Level

Incidence of qualified respondents is 90%

Data Collection Dates and Times

January 21, 1988 - February 5, 1988

All interviews were collected during the evening hours between 5:00 pm and 9:00 pm and on the weekend between the hours of 10:00 am and 6:00 pm.

Statistical Reliability

At the overall sample size of N=800, we have a sampling error range of ± 3.47 percentage points. This means if the sample results indicate 50% of the respondents offered a particular response, we can be assured the results will not vary from the true percentage by more than ± 3.47 percentage points in 95 out of 100 replications of the study. The following table provides the error range at different probabilities given a sample size of N=800:

<u>Probability of Occurrence</u>	<u>Error Range</u>
50%	$\pm 3.47\%$
40	$\pm 3.40\%$
30	$\pm 3.18\%$
20	$\pm 2.78\%$
10	$\pm 2.08\%$

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

- What is the Present Level of Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of the Washington State Court System?

Residents of Washington State generally have a low level of awareness and knowledge of the state's court system. Only 26% rate themselves as being familiar with the court system with the majority (54%) being unfamiliar. Their awareness of different levels and types of courts also appears to support their self-professed awareness, with less than 50% of the population able to recall any one type of court.

To test the public's knowledge and understanding of the court system, a series of true/false statements were administered. The results show the public has a general understanding of presumption of innocence, the right to be represented by counsel, the powers of the supreme court, the role of the prosecuting attorney, the use and power of jury trials and the requirement to make restitution. The public is uncertain whether the prosecutor has the ability to appeal the case if the accused has been found innocent of the crime and they wrongly believe the state constitution cannot override the U.S. constitution.

- Is it True the Public Believes the Burden of Proof Rests on the Defendant, as Found in Previous Studies?

To test whether people are aware the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty, two true/false questions were asked. One question replicated the question found in both the 1983 Hearst Study and the 1977 National Center for the State Courts Study. The other question was reworded to test the validity of the results.

When asked: "In a criminal trial, it is up to the person who is accused of the crime to prove this innocence", one-third (34%) of the population erroneously responds the statement is true. These results are similar to earlier studies in they suggest the public lacks awareness regarding the presumption of innocence.

When the question is reworded and asked: "In a criminal trial it is up the prosecutor to prove the person accused of the crime is guilty", nearly all (93%) of the popula-

tion correctly offers a "true" response. This suggests the low awareness of presumption of innocence indicated in past research may be a result of the wording of the question asked.

- How Much Confidence Does the Public Have in the Court System?

Washington State residents generally feel people are treated fairly within the state court system. Specifically, they feel defendants and witnesses are treated fairly and that men and women are treated with equal fairness. They are less likely to agree, however, that victims are treated in a fair manner and whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness. Residents tend to disagree poor people and wealthy people are treated equally which was also evident in focus group discussions.

Residents believe it costs too much to go to court which may explain why they feel poor and wealthy people are treated differently. They also feel court proceedings take too long to complete but respond neutrally when asked whether it's easy to follow court proceedings.

The public appears to have confidence in the decisions of judges, as they respond decisions made by judges are just as reliable, if not more reliable than decisions made by other public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners and decisions made by the senators and representatives.

Overall, it appears the public does have confidence in the state's court system. There is, however, room for improvement such as reducing the cost of going to court and the time spent to receive a decision which may impact whether some people are being treated fairly.

- How Well Does the Public Perceive the Court System is Performing?

Nearly one-half of the adult population of Washington rates the Washington court system favorable. Only one-quarter offer a negative rating. Those offering a positive rating believe there is room for improvement. Those offering neutral or negative ratings believe the system is not good or is better elsewhere, there is a problem with lenient sentences, its unfair, overloaded and takes too long to receive a decision.

When asked specifically how the courts perform in terms of efficiency, responsiveness, competence and protection of society, the public offers Washington courts moderate ratings along all factors measured.

There definitely appears to be areas within the court system which need improvement either in actuality or in the public's perception of the courts.

● What Are the Key Areas of Concern Regarding the Court System?

Areas which have been identified as problem areas within the court system are:

- Cost of going to court
- Time taken to receive a decision
- Treatment of poor people vs. wealthy people
- Lenient sentences
- Overloaded courts

Areas which can be improved include:

- Court efficiency
- Responsiveness
- Protection of Society
- Competence

● Does Knowledge About the Court System Differentiate Public Opinion, Attitudes and Confidence?

Familiarity with the court system appear to have either a neutral or positive affect on public's attitudes and level of confidence in the Washington court system. Those familiar with the court system rate the courts higher in terms of efficiency, responsiveness, competence and protection of society when compared to those who are unfamiliar with the courts. Furthermore, they are more likely to agree court personnel are courteous and helpful, decisions made by juries are fair and it is easy to understand and follow court proceeding. They are also

more likely to believe poor and wealthy people are treated equally, as well as whites and non-whites and men and women. They are also more likely to feel victims, witnesses and defendants are treated with equal fairness.

Familiarity with the court system does not appear to have any affect on how the public evaluates the court system overall or their confidence in judicial decisions vs. decisions made by other public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners or senators and representative. Familiarity also does not appear to impact the public's perception that court proceedings are too costly and take too long to complete or whether offenders are receiving the sentences they deserve.

- To What Degree has the Public Had Direct Experience With the Court System?

Most (90%) residents have had some experience with the Washington State court system. The most common types of experiences include professional contact with a lawyer (57%), being an observer during a court proceeding (54%) and having been to court for a traffic or parking violation (40%). About one-third (32%) know a lawyer on a personal basis and 27% have been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child-support action. Less than 15% have been either a witness or a defendant in a criminal case, been party to a civil case that went to court or filed a claim or had a claim filed against them in small claims court.

Nearly one-fifth (19%) have served on jury duty. Those who have served generally feel it was a positive experience and would be willing to serve again.

- In What Way Does Experience with the Court System Affect Attitudes?

Residents having any experience with the court system in general and those with no experience both respond similarly in terms of the attitudes measured, therefore concluding experience in general does not have an affect on the public's attitudes toward the court system.

Differences are evident, however, when specific types of experiences are examined.

Specifically, victims ...

- ... offer the court an overall lower rating
- ... more likely to believe it costs too much to go to court
- ... less likely to believe it is easy to understand and follow court proceedings
- ... less likely to believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve

Witness or defendants ...

- ... offer the court an overall lower rating
- ... less likely to believe the courts operate efficiently
- ... more likely to believe it is easy to understand court proceedings, men and women are treated equally, as well as poor and wealthy people
- ... more likely to believe court proceedings take too long to complete

Those party to a civil suit ...

- ... offer the court an overall lower rating
- ... more likely to believe court proceedings take too long to complete
- ... more likely to believe court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite
- ... less likely to believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve

Those who filed a small claim or had a small claim filed against them, as well as those who have been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child support are

- ... less likely to believe it is easy to understand and follow court proceedings
- ... more likely to believe the courts are competent

Those who know a lawyer on a personal basis are ...

- ... more likely to believe the courts are competent

Those serving on jury duty are ...

- ... more likely to believe the courts are efficient, responsive and competent
- ... more likely to believe court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite and court proceedings are easy to understand and follow
- ... more likely to believe poor and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness, as well as whites and non-whites and men and women
- ... more likely to believe victims and defendant are treated fairly

• How Does Knowing a Lawyer Affect the Public's Attitudes Toward the Court System?

Nearly two-thirds (66%) of Washington State residents know a lawyer on either a casual (32%) or professional (57%) basis.

It appears as though knowing a lawyer has a neutral or negative affect on the public's confidence in the court system. Those who know a lawyer rate the court's performance in protecting society less favorably than those who do not know a lawyer. They are less likely to believe poor and wealthy people, whites and non-whites and men and women are treated with equal fairness. They are also less likely to believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve. Knowing a lawyer, however, does not appear to impact their overall rating of the court system, their perceptions of court efficiency, responsiveness or competence, or their confidence in judicial decisions vs. other public officials. There are no differences in how they perceive the courtesy and helpfulness of court personnel, the fairness of jury decisions, in how easy it is to understand and follow court proceedings, whether it takes too long to complete court proceedings and the cost of going to court. There are also no differences in whether victims, witnesses and defendants are treated fairly during court proceedings.

As mentioned previously, knowing a lawyer on a personal basis tends to increase the public's perception of competence in the court system.

- What is the Public's Attitudes Toward Sentencing and How Aware are They of the State's Determinate Sentencing Law?

Residents of Washington State generally do not feel offenders are receiving the sentences they deserve (63%) and feel the sentences given are too lenient. Most (67%), however, do not believe in mandatory sentences and believe each person convicted of a crime should be sentenced individually.

Very few residents are aware there have been changes in the state's sentencing law in the last five years (29%). Less than half of those who are aware mention the change involved sentencing guidelines/minimum and maximum sentences/point system or elimination of parole supervision.

- Does a Gender Bias Exist in the Court System?

While the results cannot conclude whether a bias exists, most residents (61%) believe men and women are treated fairly in the Washington State court system. As may be expected, those who do believe there is a gender bias are more frequently women (57% vs. 45%). They are also more likely to have had professional contact with a lawyer and are less likely to have served on jury duty. Experience related to legal proceedings surrounding divorce or child support action does not appear to impact gender bias beliefs.

Familiarity does appear to have an impact on the perception of gender bias--those familiar with the court system are less likely to believe a gender bias exists.

- Does a Minority Bias Exist in the Court System?

Again, the results cannot conclude whether a bias exists, however, nearly one-half (49%) of the residents believe whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness in the Washington State court system. Both whites and non-whites respond similarly, however, these results are based on a small sample of non-whites (8% or N=62 respondents comprise the non-white sample) since the total sample was drawn in proportion to the population. As with gender bias, those who have served on jury duty are less likely to believe a minority bias exists.

Again, familiarity appears to impact perceptions of minority bias--those familiar with the court system are less likely to believe a minority bias exists.

- Is the Public Aware of How Judges are Selected in the State of Washington? What are Their Attitudes Regarding the Review of Judges?

Most residents are aware judges in Washington State are both appointed and elected (72%).

About one-half (52%) of the residents believe the professional and personal conduct of judges are currently being reviewed and nearly all believe the conduct of judges should be reviewed (97%).

- What Are the Current and Potential Sources of Information About the Court System?

The most popular sources of information currently used to gather information about the court system is newspapers (75%) and television news (54%). The majority of the population would like more information about the court system (69%) and prefer to receive information from newspapers (43%) and television news (31%). Receiving literature in the mail (19%) and from pamphlets distributed in public places (15%) are also preferred sources of information. Judges and lawyers are not currently used as sources of information about the court system (2% and 4%, respectively).

It is interesting to note, the sources from which the public receives the majority of their information are not the sources they feel provide the most accurate information. Sources which they rate highest in terms of accuracy include: judges, television documentaries, pamphlets distributed in public places and schools. These sources represent potential ways to distribute information about the courts. While some of these sources are currently being used, expanded use may want to be considered.

Washington residents would like information regarding how the court system works, judicial decisions, general information about the courts and changes in laws.

- What is the Public's Attitude Toward News Cameras in the Court Room?

Many residents feel cameras should not be allowed in court rooms (54%) because it is an invasion of privacy, they are afraid news coverage may be biased or distorted, as well as affect how people act or what they say and may influence the final outcome of the trial. Those who feel news cameras should be allowed (36%) feel the public has the right to view court proceedings and should be more aware of court proceedings.

- What About Lawyers as a Source of Information?

Two-thirds (67%) of the population either rely or would rely on lawyers as a source of information about Washington courts. While the public would be likely to rely on lawyers to provide information, they are less likely to believe lawyers provide accurate information about the courts when compared with judges and TV documentaries.

- What, if any, Information Does the Public Want About Judges?

Two-thirds (67%) of all residents would like to receive more information about judges in Washington State. The information they would like to have provided includes: the background of judges and candidates, judicial decisions, what the job entails/how many hours judges work, the experience and qualifications of judges, their sentencing record/decisions and how judges stand on various issues. Of lesser interest are the moral character of judges and types of cases they hear.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strive to Increase the Public's Level of Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of the Washington State Court System.

Results of the study show most residents are not familiar with the Washington State court system. The study has also shown familiarity with the court system either has a neutral or positive affect on the public's attitudes. Increasing public awareness and knowledge of Washington courts, therefore, will increase their apparent lack of awareness as well as increase their confidence in the court system.

2. Specifically, Provide the Public with Information Regarding Appeals and the Power of the State Constitution.

These are two areas, tested in the research, where the public lacks awareness.

3. Provide the Public with Information About the Court System via Newspapers and Television News, as well as Through Sources such as Judges, Television Documentaries, Pamphlets Distributed in Public Places and Through Schools.

Newspapers and television news are the two sources from which the public currently receives the majority of their information about the court system. These two mediums are also their preferred sources of information. While newspapers and television news are the public's current and preferred sources of information, their confidence in the accuracy of these sources are low. Sources perceived as providing accurate information include: judges, television documentaries, pamphlets distributed in public places and schools. Use of these sources, which are perceived as providing accurate information, should be considered and further explored.

4. Provide the Public with General Information About How the Courts Operate, Judicial Decisions and Changes in Laws.

When asked for the type of information they would like to have provided about the court system, respondents most frequently mention these subjects.

5. Specifically, Provide Information Regarding the Determinate Sentencing Law.

Only a small proportion of the state's adult population is aware any changes have been made in Washington's sentencing law. Even fewer appear to be aware of the determinate sentencing law--what it means and how it affects our court system.

6. Specifically, Provide More Information About Judges--Their Background, Decisions, Responsibilities and Sentencing Record.

From the research it is evident the public would like more information about judges and they specify the type of information they would like to have provided.

7. Acknowledge there are Areas in the Court System Where the Public Either Lacks Confidence in the Courts or Believes Performance can be Improved.

Areas where the public lacks confidence in the court system include:

- Equal treatment of poor and wealthy people
- Amount of time taken to receive a court decision
- Cost of going to court

Furthermore, they believe sentences are too lenient and the courts are overloaded.

Areas which can be improved include:

- Court efficiency
- Responsiveness
- Competence
- Protection of society

8. In Addition, Educate the Public as to Why These Problem Areas Exist.

Tell the public ...

...why it takes the time it does to receive a court decision.

...why it costs what it does to go to court.

...why the courts are not as efficient, responsive and competent as they can be.

...why the courts are overloaded.

...how sentencing guidelines are set.

...if any measures have been taken to improve the treatment of victims or to promote equal treatment of poor and wealthy people.

Again, a better understanding of the court system and the measures taken to improve the system will likely generate more positive attitudes and increase the public's confidence.

9. Further Explore the Areas of Gender and Minority Bias in the Courts.

Although the public does not perceive a strong gender or minority bias in the courts, the results of the study cannot conclude whether an actual bias does or does not exist. Measurements of actual experiences, rather than perceptions, should be explored to determine whether there is a bias in the Washington State court system.

10. Recognize Some Types of Direct Experience with the Court System Have an Affect on Attitudes.

Certain types of direct experience with the court system bring about some positive and negative changes in the public's attitudes toward the system. Recognizing the impact of various experiences on attitudes can help to identify areas which need attention, as well as to provide a better understanding of the perspective of individuals after engaging with the court system.

11. Encourage More People to Serve on Jury Duty--Promote the Experience.

In addition to its primary function, jury duty experience offers the court system many more benefits. It appears as though it may increase the public's familiarity with the court system, as well as their general attitude toward the courts. Nearly all those who have served on jury duty respond it was a positive experience and most would be willing to serve again.

Still only a small proportion of the population have served before. Exploring why more people don't serve and what can be done to promote the experience should be encouraged.

12. Deal Carefully with the Sensitive Issue of News Cameras in Court Rooms.

The public appears to be divided as to whether news cameras belong in court rooms. Both sides offer strong reasons why they should or should not be allowed. Consider positioning news cameras as an educational medium which is to be used as objectively and inobtrusively as possible, while taking the nature of the proceeding and the privacy of those involved into consideration.

13. Findings of the Study Should be Shared with the State Bar to Acquaint Lawyers with How the Public's Attitudes About the Court System Vary by Their Amount of Contact with a Lawyer.

The study reveals professional or personal contact with a lawyer has either a neutral or negative affect on the public's attitudes toward the court system. This may be a result of the negative experiences associated with going to court and needing a lawyer. Providing lawyers with these findings will help them become more sensitive to the affect their contact with the client has on the public's attitudes toward the state's court system.

14. Work with the State Bar to Help Increase the Public's Confidence in the Information Provided by Lawyers.

Most of the population either relies or would rely on lawyers as a source of information about the court system. The public's confidence in the accuracy of information provided by lawyers is somewhat lower than other sources such as judges and TV documentaries. If the public's confidence in the information provided by lawyers can be increased, lawyers can be a good source of information about the court system.

15. Set Objectives and Track Changes in the Public's Awareness and Attitudes Towards the Court System.

The results of the current study provides a baseline measurement of public awareness and attitudes. This baseline can be used to set objectives which define targeted changes in awareness level and attitudes. As a public education program is developed and implemented, periodic tracking studies can be used to measure changes in public awareness and confidence in Washington's court system.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

I. GENERAL IMAGE OF WASHINGTON STATE COURT SYSTEM

I. GENERAL IMAGE OF WASHINGTON STATE COURT SYSTEM

Top-of-Mind Image

To obtain the top-of-mind image of the Washington State court system in the mind's of state residents, respondents are asked to respond with the first word or phrase that comes to mind when thinking of the Washington State court system.

Residents offer a wide variety of different responses--both positive and negative. No one word or phrase is used consistently to describe the state's court system as each response offered is mentioned by less than 10% of the residents. Positive responses most frequently used to describe the court system include: "fair," "justice" and "good"; while negative responses most frequently include: "too many cases/overloaded," "slow/takes too long to receive a decision," "poor/lousy" and "lenient sentences."

There is no significant difference of responses between residents of Eastern Washington, Western Washington or Southwest Washington. Furthermore, no difference exists between respondents who live in either rural, suburban or urban residential areas.

Question: What one word or phrase first comes to mind when you think of the Washington State Court System?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Fair	9%
Too many cases/overloaded	7
Slow/takes too long to receive a decision	6
Adequate/OK	5
Poor/lousy	5
Justice	5
Lenient sentences	4
Good	4
Don't know	10

All other reasons receive less than 4% of the responses

Overall Rating of Washington State Court System

Residents are then asked to rate the Washington State court system using a seven-point scale where one is "very negative" and seven is "very positive." Nearly one-half (48%) of the residents offer the court system a positive rating of 5, 6 or 7. Approximately one-quarter either offer a neutral rating of 4 (28%) or a negative rating of 1, 2 or 3 (23%).

Those offering a positive rating most frequently believe the court system can still be improved (24%) and is fair (21%). Other comments frequently received include: "it's a good system" (12%) and "the system works" (9%).

"Not good/better elsewhere" (24%) is the reason mentioned most frequently by residents offering a neutral rating. Other comments frequently received include: "lenient sentences" (16%), "slow/takes too long to receive a decision" (7%), and "unfair" (7%).

Residents offering negative ratings most frequently feel the court system needs improvement (32%) and has a problem with lenient sentences (21%). Other comments frequently include: "unfair" (15%), "slow/takes too long to receive a decision" (11%) and "overloaded/too many cases" (11%).

The demographic profile of residents offering the court system a positive rating is quite similar to those offering a negative rating. Age is the only characteristic where a significant difference is found. Residents who evaluate the court system more positively tend to be slightly older than those offering negative ratings as they are less likely to be between the ages of 35 and 54 (34% vs. 41%) and more likely to be 65 years of age or older (16% vs. 10%).

No differences exist in how respondents of Western, Eastern or Southwestern Washington rate the court system, or between urban, suburban and rural dwellers.

Question: Thinking about your own personal experiences or things you may have seen or heard, how would you rate your overall impression of the Washington State Court System? Use a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "very negative" and 7 is "very positive."

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Positive (5,6 or 7 rating)	48%
Neutral (4 rating)	28
Negative (1,2 or 3 rating)	23
Don't know	1
Mean	4.37

Question: Why do you say that?

	Total N=800	Positive ¹ Rating N=383	Neutral ² Rating N=220	Negative ³ Rating N=184
Not good/better elsewhere	25%	24%	24	32%
Lenient sentences	13	7	16	21
Fair	12	21	4	2
Slow/takes too long to receive a decision	7	5	7	11
Unfair	7	3	7	5
Good system	7	12	5	--
Too many cases/overloaded	6	4	6	11
System works	5	9	2	--
Room for improvement	4	6	5	2
They do the best they can	4	7	1	1
Don't know	9	6	14	5

All other reasons receive less than 4% of the responses

- 1 Positive rating = 5, 6 or 7 rating
- 2 Neutral rating = 4 rating
- 3 Negative rating = 1, 2 or 3 rating

Demographic Profile of Residents Who Rate
the Washington State Court System Either
Positive, Neutral or Negative

	Positive Rating <u>N=383</u>	Neutral Rating <u>N=220</u>	Negative Rating <u>N=184</u>
Sex:			
Male	49%	55%	48%
Female	51	45	52
Age:			
18-34	35%	38%	33%
35-54	34	33	41
55-64	14	13	13
65+	16	15	10
Mean	44.1	43.2	42.9
Marital Status:			
Married	60%	61%	67%
Not married	40	38	33
Education:			
High school or less	39%	38%	38%
Some college/technical school	35	31	33
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	17	18	22
graduate school	9	11	7

	Positive Rating <u>N=383</u>	Neutral Rating <u>N=220</u>	Negative Rating <u>N=184</u>
Occupation:			
Retired	22%	16%	15%
Professional	15	16	17
Service worker	14	12	9
Homemaker	11	7	13
Manager/administrator	8	13	11
Laborer	7	10	8
Sales	5	5	5
Student	5	5	5
Unemployed	4	1	2
Clerical	2	3	3
Self-employed	1	4	3
Crafts	2	2	2
Operative	1	2	2
Military	1	1	1
Annual Household Income:			
Under \$15,000	20%	17%	18%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	22	24	23
\$25,000 - \$34,999	23	21	18
\$35,000 - \$44,999	15	13	17
\$45,000 or more	14	17	14
Mean (in thousands)	\$30.0	\$30.9	\$30.1
Length of Residence in Washington:			
Mean (in years)	30.7	26.3	29.1
Registered to vote in Washington:			
	80%	77%	82%
Political Affiliation:			
Conservative	33%	31%	36%
Moderate	40	43	40
Liberal	21	21	18

	Positive Rating <u>N=383</u>	Neutral Rating <u>N=220</u>	Negative Rating <u>N=184</u>
Region of Residence:			
Western Washington	69%	67%	64%
Eastern Washington	23	25	24
Southwest Washington	7	7	11
Type of Residence:			
Urban	34%	30%	32%
Suburban	36	36	39
Rural	29	32	28
Cultural/Ethnic Background:			
Caucasian	91%	89%	93%
Native American	2	5	2
Black	2	1	2
Asian	1	2	1
Hispanic	1	1	1
Community Activism:			
Active participant ¹	39%	37%	46%
None	61	63	54

¹ Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

Confidence in the Court System

A number of different questions were asked to gather the public's confidence in the Washington State court system-- 1) evaluation of the court's performance along various factors, 2) how reliable judicial decisions are in comparison to decisions made by other public officials, and 3) the degree to which they agree or disagree with attitude statements pertaining to Washington courts.

Residents are first asked to rate the performance of Washington courts along the following factors:

- Court efficiency
- Responsiveness
- Protection of society
- Competence

Mean (average) ratings gathered reveal Washington residents offer the court system moderate ratings for all performance factors evaluated, with all mean ratings ranging between 4.10 and 4.80.

Residents are then asked whether decisions made by judges are more, less or just as reliable as decisions made by other public officials. Washington residents respond they have confidence in the decision of judges and believe they are just as reliable, if not more reliable, than decisions made by the governor, mayor and county commissioners and decisions made by senators and representatives.

A series of attitude statements are then presented and residents are asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement using a seven-point scale where one is "strongly disagree" and seven is "strongly agree." These attitude statements include:

- The jury system is an effective way to make court decisions.
- In general, decisions made by juries are fair.
- It is easy to understand and follow court proceedings.
- Court proceedings take too long to complete.
- It costs too much to go to court.

- In general, people are treated fairly within the Washington State court system.
- Poor people and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness.
- Whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness.
- Men and women are treated with equal fairness.
- Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings.
- Witnesses are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings.
- Defendants are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings.

Washington residents tend to agree it costs too much to go to court (5.65), court proceedings take too long to complete (5.43) and court personnel are generally courteous, helpful and polite (5.35). They also agree people are generally treated fairly within the Washington State court system (5.00). Specifically, defendants (5.13) and witnesses (5.07) are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings and generally men and women are treated with equal fairness (4.85).

Residents neither agree nor disagree victims are treated in a fair manner (4.50) and whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness (4.35). They also offer a neutral response when asked whether it's easy to understand and follow court proceedings (3.99).

Poor people and wealthy people are generally not perceived as being treated with equal fairness in Washington State courts (3.24).

News Cameras in Court Rooms

When specifically asked whether news cameras should be allowed in court rooms, residents tend to disagree (3.48; using a seven-point scale where one is "strongly disagree" and seven is "strongly agree").

Those who believe cameras should be allowed in court rooms generally feel the public has the right to view court proceedings (54%) and should be more aware of court proceedings (34%). Those who feel cameras do not belong in court rooms believe it is an invasion of privacy (38%), they are afraid news coverage may be biased or distorted (17%), as well as affect how people act or what they say (12%) and ultimately may influence the outcome of the trial (11%).

Question: On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "poor" and 7 is "excellent," how would you rate your overall impression of the Washington State court system along the following factors based on anything you know or have heard?

	Total Mean Rating <u>N=800</u>	Good (5, 6 or 7 Rating)	Poor (1, 2 or 3 Rating)
Competence	4.78	60%	15%
society	4.16	45	31
Responsiveness	4.13	39	30
Protection of Court efficiency	4.10	39	32

Question: In general, do you think decisions made by judges are more, less or just as reliable as decisions made by other public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
More reliable	45%
Just as reliable	47
Less reliable	6

Question: In general, do you think decisions made by judges are more, less or just as reliable as decisions made by other public officials such as senators and representatives?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
More reliable	48%
Just as reliable	42
Less reliable	8

Question: I am going to read you some statements about the Washington State court system. After each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree using a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree."

	Total Mean Rating <u>N=800</u>	Agree (5, 6 or 7) <u>Rating</u>	Disagree (1, 2 or 3) <u>Rating</u>
It costs too much to go to court	5.65	79	11
Court proceedings take too long to complete	5.43	74	14
In general, decisions made by juries are fair	5.37	77	9
Generally, court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite	5.35	71	11
Defendants are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	5.13	68	12
Witnesses are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	5.07	65	13
In general, people are treated fairly within the Washington State court system	5.00	68	13
Men and women are treated with equal fairness	4.85	61	23
Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	4.50	52	28
Whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness	4.35	49	31
It's easy to understand and follow court proceedings	3.99	42	40
Poor people and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness	3.24	27	58

Question: Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statement using a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree."

Total
Mean Rating
N=800

News cameras should be allowed
in court rooms

3.48

Question: Why is that?

	Total <u>N=800</u>	Cameras Should be Allowed <u>N=280</u>	Cameras Should not be Allowed <u>N=429</u>
Invasion of privacy	25%	6%	38%
Public has the right to view court proceedings	21	54	1
Public should be more aware of court proceedings	14	34	2
Depends on type of case	12	11	8
News coverage may be biased/distorted	11	2	17
May affect outcome/in- fluence outcome	7	1	11
May affect how people act/ what people say	7	1	12
Disruptive	6	2	9
May influence the decision of judges	5	3	7

All other reasons receive less than 5% of the responses.

II. FAMILIARITY AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE COURT SYSTEM

II. FAMILIARITY AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE COURT SYSTEM

Self-Professed Familiarity with the Court System

Residents are asked to rate their level of familiarity with the Washington State court system on a seven-point scale where one is "not at all familiar" and seven is "very familiar."

Only one-quarter of Washington State residents rate themselves as being familiar with the court system (26% give a rating of 5, 6 or 7). One-fifth (20%) of the residents respond they are neither familiar nor unfamiliar with the court system (offer a neutral rating of 4). The majority of the residents, therefore, describe themselves as being unfamiliar with the court system (54% give a rating of 1, 2 or 3).

Awareness of Different Types/Levels of Courts

To test residents' knowledge of the Washington State court system, respondents are asked to name the different types or levels of courts in the state's court system on an unaided basis.

Awareness of the various types and levels of courts is low among Washington State residents. The Supreme Court is recalled most frequently (43%), followed by superior (32%), district (26%) and municipal courts (23%). Recalled less frequently are the Court of Appeals (16%), traffic (15%) and small claims court (14%), followed by county (8%), criminal (6%) and civil courts (6%).

Although there is no significant difference between residents of Western Washington, Eastern Washington, and Southwest Washington, a slight difference does exist between residents who live in an urban area (3.53 mean rating) and those who live in a suburban area (3.23 mean rating) and a rural area (3.14 mean rating). Urban residents indicate they are somewhat more familiar with the court system.

Demographically, a higher percentage of males (57%) consider themselves familiar (5, 6 or 7 rating) than do females (43%). Residents who are familiar tend to be slightly older (46.9 average age) compared to respondents who rate themselves as unfamiliar (41.9 average age).

Knowledge of Various Aspects of the Court System

Residents are then taken through a series of statements about the Washington State court system and asked to respond whether each statement is true or false. Many of the statements were replicated from the 1983 Hearst Study and the 1977 National Center for the State Courts Study¹. Comparison to previous studies are made whenever possible.

● Presumption of Innocence

Replicating the question included in the Hearst Report in 1983 and the National Center for State Court Study in 1977, we find a large percentage of Washington State residents are unaware a person is always presumed innocent until proven guilty. These results are similar to those gathered in previous studies:

Question: True or false; in a criminal trial, it is up to the person who is accused of the crime to prove this innocence.

	Total N=800	The Hearst Report 1983 N=983	National Center for State Courts 1977 N=1931
True	34%	50%	37%
False	66	46	56
Don't know/ no answer	--	4	7

1 Sources:

"The American Public, The Media and The Judicial System: a national survey on public awareness and personal experience," Sponsored by: The Hearst Corporation, 1983.

"State Courts--A Blueprint for the Future," National Center for State Courts Publications Department, 1978.

When the question is reworded, we find nearly all Washington State residents correctly respond a person is considered innocent until proven guilty:

Question: True or false; in a criminal trial, it is up to the prosecutor to prove the person accused of the crime is guilty.

	Total <u>N=800</u>
True	93%
False	7

This may suggest the low awareness of presumption of innocence indicated in past research may be a result of the wording of the question.

● The Right to be Represented by Counsel

Nearly all Washington State residents are aware that everyone accused of a serious crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer. Washington State residents respond similarly as U.S. residents in the 1983 Hearst Study and the National Center for State Courts Study in 1977.

Question: True or false; Everyone accused of a serious crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer.

	Total <u>N=800</u>	The Hearst Report 1983 <u>N=983</u>	National Center for State Courts 1977 <u>N=1931</u>
True	99%	97%	93%
False	1	3	2
Don't know/ no answer	--	--	5

● Powers of the Supreme Court

Most Washington State residents wrongly believe the U.S. Supreme Court can review and reverse every decision made by state courts. Similar results were also found in the 1983 Hearst Study and the National Center for the State Courts Study in 1977.

Question: True or false; every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

	Total N=800	The Hearst Report 1983 N=983	National Center for State Courts 1977 N=1931
True	89%	77%	72%
False	11	11	12
Don't know/ no answer	--	12	16

● The Prosecuting Attorney

Most Washington State residents correctly believe the prosecuting attorney can decide whether or not to prosecute a case.

Question: True or false; a prosecuting attorney can determine whether or not to prosecute for an alleged crime.

	Total N=800
True	78%
False	22

• Jury Trials

Nearly all Washington State residents are aware that not all court trials are heard before juries. Washington residents offer more frequently a correct response than U.S. residents in the 1983 Hearst study.

Question: True or false; all court cases are heard before juries.

	Total N=800	The Hearst Report 1983 N=983
True	5%	23
False	95	74
Don't Know/No Response	--	3

Most Washington State residents correctly believe it is false that the decision of the jury is final and can never be overruled by a judge. Washington residents appear to be somewhat more aware of the power of a jury decision than U.S. residents in the 1983 Hearst study.

Question: True or false; The decision of a jury is final and can never be overruled by a judge.

	Total N=800	The Hearst Report 1983 N=983
True	27%	30%
False	73	59
Don't know/ no response	--	11

- Appeals

In Washington State, residents are uncertain whether the prosecutor has the ability to appeal the case if the accused is found innocent of the crime. The majority wrongly believe the prosecutor does have the ability to appeal the case.

Question: True or false; If someone is found innocent of a crime, the prosecutor can appeal the case.

	Total <u>N=800</u>
True	55%
False	45

- Restitution

Most Washington State residents are aware that a person convicted of stealing property or money does not always have to make restitution or pay back to the value of what was stolen. Similar results were also found in the 1983 Hearst study.

Question: True or false; If a person is convicted of stealing property or money, he must always pay back the value of what was stolen.

	Total <u>N=800</u>	The Hearst Report 1983 <u>N=983</u>
True	28%	25%
False	72	70
Don't know/ no response	--	5

- State Constitution

Nearly all Washington State residents wrongly believe the U.S. Constitution has the final word and cannot be overridden by the State Constitution.

Question: True or false; Washington State has a constitution which can override the U.S. Constitution.

	Total <u>N=800</u>
True	9%
False	91

Question: On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "not at all familiar" and 7 is "very familiar", how familiar would you say you are with the Washington State Court System?

	<u>Residential Area</u>			
	<u>Total</u> <u>N=800</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>N=256</u>	<u>Suburban</u> <u>N=296</u>	<u>Rural</u> <u>N=238</u>
Familiar (5,6 or 7 rating)	26%	29%	24%	23%
Neither familiar nor unfamiliar (4 rating)	20	21	21	17
Unfamiliar (1,2 or 3 rating)	54	50	53	60
Mean rating	3.31	3.53	3.23	3.14

Question: What are the different types or levels of courts found within the Washington State Court System?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Supreme	43%
Superior	32
District	26
Municipal	23
Court of Appeals	16
Traffic	15
Small claims	14
County	8
Criminal	6
Civil	6
Don't know	24

All other mentions receive less than 6% of the responses

Demographic Profile of Residents By Level of Familiarity
With the Washington State Court System

	Familiar <u>N=205</u>	Neither Familiar nor Unfamiliar <u>N=158</u>	Unfamiliar <u>N=435</u>
Sex:			
Male	57%	53%	46%
Female	43	47	54
Age:			
18-34	31%	32	33%
35-54	31	39	37
55-64	19	15	10
65+	18	12	14
Mean	46.9	43.8	41.9
Marital Status:			
Married	57%	68	63%
Not married	43	32	37
Education:			
High school or less	35%	37	40%
Some college/technical school	33	39	32
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	20	16	18
graduate school	10	8	10

		Neither Familiar nor Unfamiliar	Unfamiliar	Unfamiliar
	Familiar N=205	N=158	N=435	
Occupation:				
Retired	23%	19	16%	
Professional	18	11	17	
Service worker	10	14	13	
Homemaker	7	7	13	
Manager/administrator	11	9	10	
Laborer	8	9	7	
Sales	4	9	4	
Student	5	6	4	
Unemployed	1	3	3	
Clerical	1	3	3	
Self-employed	3	2	2	
Crafts	1	4	1	
Operative	2	1	2	
Military	1	--	2	
Annual Household Income:				
Under \$15,000	16%	18%	21%	
\$15,000 - \$24,999	19	27	23	
\$25,000 - \$34,999	24	20	20	
\$35,000 - \$44,999	13	13	16	
\$45,000 or more	18	18	13	
Mean (in thousands)	\$32,600	\$31,000	\$29,100	
Length of Residence in Washington:				
Mean (in years)	32.4	30.5	26.8	
Registered to vote in Washington:				
	86%	78%	76%	
Political affiliation:				
Conservative	31%	38%	33%	
Moderate	42	34	34	
Liberal	20	23	23	

	Familiar N=205	Neither Familiar nor Unfamiliar N=158	Unfamiliar N=435
Region of Residence:			
Western Washington	69%	62%	69%
Eastern Washington	21	30	23
Southwest Washington	9	8	8
Type of Residence:			
Urban	36%	34%	30%
Suburban	35	40	37
Rural	27	25	33
Cultural/Ethnic Background:			
Caucasian	86%	89%	94%
Native American	5	4	2
Black	3	1	1
Asian	2	1	1
Hispanic	1	2	1
Community Activism:			
Active participant ¹	52%	46%	34%
None	48	54	66

1 Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

III. HOW KNOWLEDGE AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS COURT SYSTEM

III. HOW KNOWLEDGE AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS COURT SYSTEM

One of the primary objectives of the research is to determine whether knowledge and familiarity with the Washington State court system affects the attitudes of Washington residents; and if so, whether knowledge and familiarity have a positive or negative affect on their attitudes toward the court system.

As presented previously, residents rated their familiarity with the Washington State court system on a seven-point scale, where one is "not at all familiar" and seven is "very familiar." An examination of attitudes toward the court system by those who express a self-professed familiarity with the court system show if there is an affect on attitudes, it is generally positive.

In many areas familiarity has a positive affect on the public's confidence in the Washington State Court system:

- They rate the courts as being more efficient (4.24 vs 4.02), responsive (4.33 vs 4.07), competent (4.89 vs 4.69), as well as more favorable in terms of protecting society (4.31 vs 4.05).
- They are more likely to agree court personnel are courteous and helpful (5.55 vs 5.17), decisions made by juries are fair (5.48 vs 5.27), it is easy to understand and follow court proceedings (4.44 vs 3.69).
- They are more likely to believe poor and wealthy people treated equally (3.35 vs 3.10), as well as whites and non-whites (4.45 vs 4.22) and men and women (5.09 vs 4.71).
- They are more likely to believe victims (4.72 vs 4.40), witnesses (5.28 vs 4.92) and defendants (5.26 vs 5.07) are treated with equal fairness.

Self-professed familiarity does not appear to have an affect on the following areas:

- Overall impression of the Washington State court system (4.37 vs 4.36).
- Their confidence in judicial decisions vs. decisions made by officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners, as well as senators and representatives.
- Their belief that court proceedings take too long to complete (5.58 vs 5.47) and are too costly (5.64 vs 5.67).

- Their perception of whether offenders are receiving the sentences they deserve (32% vs 33%).

Awareness of some change in the State's sentencing law appears to have no affect on their belief that offenders generally receive the sentences they deserve. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of those aware of sentencing law changes believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve compared to 35% who are not aware of any changes.

IV. HOW EXPERIENCE AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARD COURT SYSTEM

IV. HOW EXPERIENCE AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARD COURT SYSTEM

Experience With the Legal System

Very few state residents report having no experience with the Washington State court system (10%). The most frequently mentioned experiences include professional contact with a lawyer (57%) or having been an observer during an actual court proceeding (54%). Many have been to court on a traffic violation or parking ticket (40%). Nearly one-third have a personal relationship with a lawyer (32%). More than one-quarter (27%) have been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child-support action. One-fifth (19%) of the residents have served on jury duty. A few residents have testified in court as a witness or defendant in a criminal case (14%) or attended court as a victim of a crime (7%). Few have been party to a civil case that went to court (13%) or filed a claim or had a claim filed against them in a small claims court (13%).

A higher percentage of residents of Southwest Washington have had professional contact with a lawyer (66%) when compared to residents in Western Washington (56%) and Eastern Washington (58%).

Jury Duty Experience

As mentioned previously, nearly one-fifth of Washington State residents have served on jury duty (19%). Thirty percent (30%) of Southwest Washington residents have served on jury duty compared to 18% of Eastern Washington and 19% in Western Washington. Those who have served report it was a very positive experience--82% offer a positive rating (5, 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where one is "poor" and seven is "excellent"). Only 8% report having a negative experience.

Generally, those who have served on jury duty before would be willing to serve again (81%). Those residing in Eastern and Southwest Washington (94% and 89%, respectively) are more likely to serve again than those residing in Western Washington (74%).

Effects of no Experiences vs any Experience with the Court System.

As mentioned previously, most residents have had some experience with the court system. Examining the attitudes of those with no experience vs those with any experience will reveal whether experience has an affect on attitudes; and if so, whether the affect is positive or negative.

Having experience with the court system in general, appears to have a neutral affect on attitudes. No significant differences exist in any of the attitudes measured between residents with no experience and those with some experience:

- Overall rating of the court system (4.31 vs 4.38)
- Court efficiency (4.26 vs 4.09)
- Responsiveness (4.22 vs 4.12)
- Competence (4.88 vs 4.77)
- Protection of society (4.24 vs. 4.15)
- Reliability of decisions by judges compared to senators and representatives (53% vs 47% more reliable; 8% vs 12% less reliable; 38% vs 42% just as reliable)
- Court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite (5.27 vs 5.36)
- Decisions made by juries are fair (5.26 vs 5.38)
- Easy to understand and follow court proceedings (3.96 vs 3.99)
- Court proceedings take too long to complete (5.64 vs 5.41)
- Costs too much to go to court (5.71 vs 5.64)
- In general, people are treated fairly (4.94 vs 5.01)
- Poor people and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness (3.21 vs 3.25)
- Whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness (4.21 vs 4.36)
- Men and women are treated with equal fairness (4.73 vs 4.86)

- Victims are treated with equal fairness (4.42 vs 4.51)
- Witnesses are treated with equal fairness (4.92 vs 5.08)
- Defendants are treated with equal fairness (5.14 vs 5.13)
- Offenders generally receive the sentences they deserve (33% vs 32%)

Effects of Jury Duty on Attitudes

An examination of attitudes toward the court system, by those who have served on jury duty show there is generally a positive or neutral affect on attitudes.

Jury duty results in a positive change in attitudes in the following areas when compared to the general population:

- Court efficiency (4.38 vs 4.10)
- Responsiveness (4.33 vs 4.13)
- Competence (5.03 vs 4.78)
- Court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite (5.78 vs 5.35)
- Easy to understand and follow court proceedings (4.45 vs 3.99)
- Poor and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness (3.52 vs 3.24)
- Whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness (4.70 vs 4.35)
- Men and women are treated with equal fairness (5.17 vs 4.85)
- Victims are treated fairly (4.84 vs 4.50)
- Defendants are treated fairly (5.37 vs 5.13)

Serving on jury duty does not appear to have an affect on the following areas:

- Overall rating of the Washington court system (4.54 vs 4.37)

- Protection of society (4.14 vs 4.16)
- Reliability of decisions by judges when compared to the Governor, mayor and county commissioners (49% vs 45% more reliable; 3% vs 6% less reliable; 45% vs 47% just as reliable)
- Reliability of decisions by judges when compared to senators and representatives (50% vs 48% more reliable; 5% vs 8% less reliable; 43% vs 42% just as reliable)
- Decisions made by juries are fair (5.45 vs 5.37)
- Court proceedings take too long to complete (5.30 vs 5.43)
- Costs too much to go to court (5.61 vs 5.65)
- In general, people are treated fairly (5.18 vs 5.00)
- Witnesses are treated fairly (5.17 vs 5.07)
- Offenders receive the sentences they deserve (35% vs 32%)

Differences in Attitudes by other Types of Experiences with the Court System.

In addition to jury duty, other types of experiences with the court system are explored to reveal differences in attitudes which may result from the specific type of experience residents have encountered. Comparisons are made between the specific types of experience and the general population overall.

These differences include the following:

- Victims (4.17), witnesses and defendants (4.18) and those party to a civil case (4.14) offer the courts a lower overall rating than the population in general (4.37).
- Witnesses and defendants are also less likely to believe the courts operate efficiently (3.90 vs 4.10).
- Witnesses and defendants are more likely to believe it is easy to understand and follow court proceedings (4.24 vs 3.99), men and women are treated equally (5.21 vs 4.85), as well as poor and wealthy people (3.45 vs 3.24).

- Those party to a civil case (5.62), witnesses and defendants (5.68) are more likely to believe it takes too long to receive a decision when compared to the general population (5.43).
- Those party to a civil case are more likely to believe court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite (5.69 vs 5.35).
- Those with the following experiences are less likely to believe it is easy to understand and follow court proceedings:
 - Filed a small claim or had a small claim filed against them (3.59 vs 3.99)
 - Been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child support (3.79 vs 3.99)
 - Attended court as a victim (3.59 vs 3.99)
- Victims are more likely to believe it costs too much to go to court (6.00 vs 5.65).
- Victims (22%) and those party to a civil case (25%) are slightly less likely to believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve when compared to the general population (32%).
- Those who know a lawyer on a personal basis are more likely to believe the courts are competent (4.99 vs 4.78).

Question: For classification purposes only, which, if any, of the following describes your experience with the Washington State legal system.

	Total N=800	Western Washington N=510	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
Had professional contact with a lawyer	57%	56%	58%	66%
Been an observer, in person, during an actual court proceeding	54	54	53	53
Been to court on a traffic violation or parking ticket	40	39	44	33
Have a friend or relative who is a lawyer	32	33	31	28
Have been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child support action	27	28	24	27
Have served on jury duty	19	19	18	30
Testified in court as a witness or defendant in a criminal case	14	14	14	16
Been party to a civil case that went to court, which may include personal injury, medical malpractice, product liability or breach of contract	13	12	14	17
Filed a claim or had a claim filed against you in small claims court	13	11	13	20
Attended court as a victim of a crime	7	11	7	13
Other experience	10	6	5	14
None	10	10	8	11

Multiple mentions allowed, therefore, responses may exceed 100%.

Question: Using a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "poor" and 7 is "excellent," how would you rate your experience while serving jury duty?

	Total <u>N=155</u> ¹	Western Washington <u>N=101</u>	Eastern Washington <u>N=35</u>	Southwest Washington <u>N=19</u>
Positive (5,6 or 7 rating)	82%	83%	82%	74%
Neutral (4 rating)	5	4	9	5
Negative (1,2 or 3 rating)	8	6	9	21
Don't know	5	7	--	--

1 Served on jury

Question: If you had the choice, would you serve again?

	Total N=155 ¹	Western Washington N=101	Eastern Washington N=35	Southwest Washington N=19
Yes	81%	74%	94%	89%
No	17	23	3	11
Don't know	2	3	3	--

¹ Served on jury

V. HOW KNOWING A LAWYER AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARD COURT SYSTEM

V. HOW KNOWING A LAWYER AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARD COURT SYSTEM

Nearly two-thirds (66%) of Washington State residents know a lawyer either on a casual or professional basis:

- 57% had professional contact with a lawyer.
- 32% have a friend or relative who is a lawyer.

In some cases, knowing a lawyer appears to have a negative effect on the public's confidence in the Washington court system:

- Those who know a lawyer rate the Washington courts' performance in protecting society slightly less favorably than those who do not know a lawyer (4.09 vs 4.29).
- Are less likely to believe poor and wealthy people are treated with equal fairness (3.19 vs 3.35).
- Are less likely to believe whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness (4.23 vs 4.57).
- Are less likely to believe men and women are treated with equal fairness (4.77 vs 5.00).
- Are less likely to believe offenders generally receive the sentences they deserve (29% vs 39%).

In many other areas, however, knowing a lawyer does not impact the public's attitudes about the Washington court system:

- Their overall impression of the Washington court system is the same (4.38 vs 4.35).
- They offer similar ratings in terms of court efficiency (4.07 vs 4.16), responsiveness (4.10 vs 4.19) and competence (4.74 vs 4.85).
- They respond similarly in terms of their confidence in judicial decisions compared to public officials like the governor, mayor and county commissioners, as well as senators and representatives.

- There are no statistically significant differences in how they perceive the courtesy and helpfulness of court personnel (5.38 vs 5.30), in the fairness of decisions made by juries (5.36 vs 5.39), in how easy it is to understand and follow court proceedings (3.95 vs 4.07), in whether it takes too long to complete court proceedings (5.43 vs 5.45) and whether it costs too much to go to court (5.69 vs 5.57).
- Those who know a lawyer are just as likely as those who do not know a lawyer to believe victims (4.50 vs 4.50), witnesses (5.05 vs 5.10) and defendants (5.13 vs 5.14) are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings.
- However, knowing a lawyer on a personal basis tends to increase the public's perception of competence in the court system (4.99 vs 4.78).

A few differences do exist in the demographic characteristics of those residents who know a lawyer either on a personal or professional basis and those who do not know a lawyer. Those who know a lawyer are more likely to be married (65% vs 56%), college graduates (31% vs 22%) and have higher household incomes (35% vs 22% have incomes of \$35,000 or more). In addition, they are more likely to be registered voters (82% vs 74%) and active participants in the community (46% vs 30%).

Demographic Profile of Residents Who Either
Know a Lawyer or Don't Know a Lawyer

	Know a Lawyer ¹ N=528	Don't Know A Lawyer N=272
Sex:		
Male	52%	47%
Female	48	53
Age:		
18-34	34%	39%
35-54	38	32
55-64	13	13
65+	15	15
Mean	44.0	42.9
Marital Status:		
Married	65%	56%
Not married	34	42
Education:		
High school or less	34%	46%
Some college/technical school	34	31
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	19	17
graduate school	12	5

¹ Either know a lawyer on a professional or personal basis.

	Know a Lawyer N=528	Don't Know A Lawyer N=272
Occupation:		
Retired	19%	18%
Professional	17	15
Service worker	12	14
Homemaker	10	12
Manager/administrator	11	8
Laborer	8	8
Sales	5	6
Student	4	5
Unemployed	2	3
Clerical	3	1
Self-employed	2	2
Crafts	2	1
Operative	2	1
Military	1	1
Annual Household Income:		
Under \$15,000	17%	24%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	21	26
\$25,000 - \$34,999	21	22
\$35,000 - \$44,999	17	10
\$45,000 or more	18	12
Mean (in thousands)	\$31,900.	\$27,300
Length of Residence in Washington:		
Mean (in years)	30.0	27.0
Registered to vote in Washington:		
	82%	74%
Political affiliation:		
Conservative	34%	33%
Moderate	41	42
Liberal	20	22

	Know a Lawyer N=528	Don't Know A Lawyer N=272
Region of Residence:		
Western Washington	66%	71%
Eastern Washington	25	23
Southwest Washington	9	6
Type of Residence:		
Urban	31%	34%
Suburban	37	38
Rural	31	27
Cultural/Ethnic Background:		
Caucasian	91%	91%
Native American	2	4
Black	2	*
Asian	1	1
Hispanic	1	2
Community Activism:		
Active participant ¹	46%	38%
None	54	70

* Less than 1%

1 Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

VI. AWARENESS OF AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS JUDGES

VI. AWARENESS OF AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS JUDGES

Confidence in Judicial Decisions

To measure the confidence state residents have in decisions made by state judges, questions are asked which compare the reliability of judicial decisions to decisions made by other public officials.

As mentioned previously, Washington State residents believe decisions made by judges are just as reliable or more reliable than decisions made by public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners, as well as senators and representatives. This suggests residents currently have a high level of confidence in judicial decisions--at least in relation to other public officials.

A slightly higher percentage of Southwestern Washington residents (17%) consider decisions by judges to be less reliable than other public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners when compared with Eastern Washington residents (7%) and Western Washington residents (4%). The same does not hold true for decisions by judges compared with senators and representative.

Residents who live in urban or suburban areas are more likely (47% and 50%, respectively) to think decisions made by judges are more reliable than the governor, mayor and county commissioners than are residents in rural areas (37%). Urban and suburban residents are also more likely to think decisions made by judges are more reliable than senators and representatives when compared to residents in rural areas (41%).

Question: In general, do you think decisions made by judges are more, less or just as reliable as decisions made by other public officials such as the governor, mayor and county commissioners?

	Total N=800	Western Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
More reliable	45%	46%	42%	42%
Less reliable	6	4	7	17
Just as reliable	47	46	50	41
Don't know	2	3	2	--

Question: In general, do you think decisions made by judges are more, less or just as reliable as decisions made by other public officials such as senators and representatives?

	Total N=800	Western Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
More reliable	48%	50%	45%	44%
Less reliable	8	7	10	8
Just as reliable	41	40	44	48
Don't know	3	3	1	--

Selection of Judges

Most residents are aware judges in Washington State are both appointed and elected (72%). More than one-quarter, however, erroneously believe judges are elected only (16%), appointed only (10%) or don't know how judges are selected (2%).

Question: How do you think judges are selected in the State of Washington? Are they appointed, elected or both appointed and elected?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Appointed	10%
Elected	16
Combination of both	72
Don't know	2

Review of Judges

Over one-half of Washington State residents believe the professional and personal conduct of judges is currently reviewed (52%).

Question: Is the professional and personal conduct of judges currently reviewed?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Yes	52%
No	17
Don't know	31

Nearly all residents believe the conduct of judges should be reviewed (97%).

Question: Should their conduct be reviewed?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Yes	97%
No	3
Don't know	*

* Less than 1%

Reasons why the personal and professional conduct of judges should be reviewed include the following:

Question: Why do you say that?

	Total ¹ N=772
Should be accountable to the public	18%
Everyone should be reviewed	17
They make important decisions/ have a lot of responsibility	16
To prevent corruption	15
They can make mistakes/ they are human	10
To maintain standards	9
Should be outstanding individuals	8
Level of integrity/judgement may change	7
Because they are public officials	6

All other reasons receive less than 6% of the responses.

¹ Respondents who believe judges should be reviewed.

VII. SENTENCING

VII. SENTENCING

Confidence in Sentencing

Most Washington State residents do not feel offenders receive the sentences they deserve (63%). Only one-third of the residents do feel offenders receive just sentences (32%).

Those who do not believe offenders receive the sentences they deserve generally feel sentences are too lenient (61%).

Awareness of Determinate Sentencing Law

Washington State currently has a determinate sentencing law which: 1) provides judges with sentencing guidelines; and 2) abolishes parole.

Only 29% of Washington State residents are aware the state's sentencing law has changed in the past five years. Of those who are aware, 42% mention sentencing guideline/minimum and maximum sentences/point system and 3% mention the elimination of parole supervision.

Residents from all regions of the state respond similarly, as well as urban, suburban and rural dwellers.

Attitudes Toward Mandatory Sentences

Less than one-third of all residents believe all persons convicted of the same crime should automatically receive the same sentences (31%). The majority of residents feel each person convicted of a crime should be sentenced individually.

Those residing in Southwest Washington are more likely to believe in mandatory sentences (42%) than those residing in either Western (29%) or Eastern Washington (32%).

Question: Do you feel offenders generally receive the sentences they deserve?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Yes	32%
No	63
Don't know	5

Question: Why do you say that?

	Total <u>N=800</u>	Receive Sentences Deserved <u>N=259</u>	Do Not Receive Sentences Deserved <u>N=500</u>
Sentences too lenient	43%	12%	61%
System/Courts are fair	11	35	*
Early parole	9	3	13
Some people should get heavier sentences/ some should get lighter sentences	7	5	8
Inconsistent sentences	6	4	7
Too many repeat offenders	4	1	6
Plea bargaining	4	1	5
Sentences too short	4	1	5
People accused of lesser crimes received sentences that are longer than those convicted of more serious crimes	4	2	5
All other mentions less than 4%			

* Less than 1%

Question: Are you aware of any changes in the state's sentencing laws within the past 5 years?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Yes	29%
No	71

Question: What are these changes?

	Total <u>N=230</u> ¹
Sentencing guidelines	36%
Mandatory jail term for driving while intoxicated	8
DWI laws stiffer	8
Minimum and maximum sentences	5
Child abuse laws/stiffer laws	5
No parole supervision after release	3
Serving lesser sentences because of overcrowding in prisons	2
Point system	1
Other	27
Don't know	20

¹ Aware of changes

Question: Do you believe all persons convicted of the same crime should automatically receive the same sentence?

	<u>Total</u> <u>N=800</u>	<u>Western</u> <u>Washington</u> <u>N=540</u>	<u>Eastern</u> <u>Washington</u> <u>N=192</u>	<u>Southwest</u> <u>Washington</u> <u>N=640</u>
Yes	31%	29%	32%	42%
No	67	68	66	56
Don't know	2	3	2	2

VIII. GENDER BIAS

VIII. GENDER BIAS

Generally, Washington State residents believe men and women are treated with equal fairness in Washington State courts. Sixty-one percent (61%) offer a rating of 5, 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree." Nearly one-quarter (23%) do not feel they are treated equally (1, 2 or 3 rating) and 14% offer a neutral response (4 rating).

Familiarity does appear to have an impact on the perception of gender bias--those familiar with the court system are less likely than those who are unfamiliar to believe a gender bias exists (5.09 vs. 4.71).

As may be expected, those who believe a gender bias exists in our courts also rate their impressions of Washington courts more negatively:

	Believes There is A Gender Bias <u>N=186</u>	Believes There is No Gender Bias <u>N=486</u>
Positive (5, 6 or 7 Rating)	34%	54%
Neutral (4 Rating)	30	26
Negative (1, 2 or 3 Rating)	36	18

In addition, they are also less likely to believe people are treated fairly in Washington courts (4.22 vs. 5.38).

Various experiences with the court system may affect people's beliefs regarding gender bias. In general, those who believe there is a gender bias are more likely to have had professional contact with a lawyer (66% vs. 54%) and less likely to have served on jury duty (11% vs. 21%). Other experiences like having been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child support action may have been expected to impact gender bias beliefs, but in actuality have not (33% vs. 26%).

When experience with the court system is examined by gender, it becomes apparent that women are more likely to believe there is a gender bias more frequently than men. Types of experience where perceptions of gender bias differ between men and women, include:

- Personal contact with a lawyer (4.39 vs. 5.26).
- Professional contact with a lawyer (4.47 vs. 4.93).
- Filed a small claim or had a claim (4.44 vs. 4.76).
- Filed against respondent in small claims court (4.44 vs. 4.76).
- Attended court as a victim of a crime (4.48 vs. 4.96).
- Testified as a witness or defendant in a criminal case (4.70 vs. 5.56).
- Party to a civil case that went to court (4.66 vs. 5.03).
- Been to court on a traffic violation or parking ticket (4.60 vs. 5.15).
- Been an observer during an actual court proceeding (4.50 vs. 5.14).

In a few different instances, experience with the court system shows no differences in the perceptions of men and women regarding gender bias. Men and women who have served on jury duty respond similarly in terms of gender bias (both give an average rating of 5.17), as well as those who have been party to a legal proceeding related to divorce or child support action (4.63 vs. 4.72).

Demographically, those who believe there is a gender bias are:

- More likely to be female (57% vs. 45%).
- More likely to be an active participant in the community (47% vs. 38%).

Along all other demographic characteristics, they appear similar to those who do not believe there is a gender bias.

Demographic Profiles of Residents Who Either
Believe There is no Gender Bias
or Believe There is a Gender Bias

	Believe There Is A Gender Bias <u>N=186</u>	Believe There Is No Gender Bias <u>N=486</u>
Sex:		
Male	43%	55%
Female	57	45
Age:		
18-34	33%	38%
35-54	41	32
55-64	10	14
65+	14	15
Mean	43.3	43.6
Marital Status:		
Married	60%	63%
Not married	40	36
Education:		
High school or less	32%	41%
Some college/technical school	39	31
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	17	19
graduate school	12	8

Believe There Is A Gender Bias <u>N=186</u>	Believe There Is No Gender Bias <u>N=486</u>
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Occupation:

Retired	16%	20%
Professional	16	15
Service worker	15	10
Homemaker	9	10
Manager/administrator	10	10
Laborer	10	8
Sales	5	5
Student	7	4
Unemployed	3	2
Clerical	4	2
Self-employed	2	3
Crafts	1	2
Operative	3	1
Military	1	1

Annual Household Income:

Under \$15,000	17%	20%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	22	24
\$25,000 - \$34,999	22	21
\$35,000 - \$44,999	18	13
\$45,000 or more	14	15

Mean (in dollars)	\$30,000	30,100
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Length of Residence in
Washington:

Mean (in years)	27.7	29.0
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Registered to vote
in Washington:

82%	77%
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Political affiliation:

Conservative	32%	34%
Moderate	41	42
Liberal	23	19

Believe There Is A Gender Bias <u>N=186</u>	Believe There Is No Gender Bias <u>N=486</u>
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Region of Residence:

Western Washington	65%	69%
Eastern Washington	26%	24%
Southwest Washington	9%	7%

Type of Residence:

Urban	31%	32%
Suburban	37	37
Rural	32	29

Cultural/Ethnic Background:

Caucasian	90%	91%
Native American	2	3
Black	4	1
Asian	1	1
Hispanic	1	2

Community Activism:

Active participant ¹	47%	38%
None	53	62

¹ Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

IX. MINORITY BIAS

IX. MINORITY BIAS

Nearly half of the Washington State residents believe whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness. Forty-nine percent (49%) offer a rating of 5, 6 or 7 on a seven point scale where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree". Thirty-one percent (31%) do not feel they are treated equal (1, 2 or 3 rating) and 14% offer a neutral response (4 rating).

Residents who are familiar with the court system are less likely than those who are unfamiliar to believe a minority bias exists (4.45 vs. 4.22 mean rating).

Experiences with the court system, such as jury duty may affect whether or not people believe there is a minority bias. Respondents who have served on a jury are less likely than those who have had no experiences with the court system to believe a minority bias exists (4.70 vs. 4.21 mean rating).

When analyzing the white and non-white residents several difference emerge from the data. It is important to keep in mind, however, the relatively small sample size of non-whites compared to whites used in the analysis (N=62 vs. N=728) as the total sample was drawn in proportion to the state's population. The question concerning familiarity of residents with the court system can be compared between whites and non-whites. A higher percentage of non-whites consider themselves familiar with the court system (5, 6 or 7 rating using a 1 to 7 scale where 1 is "not at all familiar" and 7 is "very familiar") than do white residents (40% vs. 24% respectively).

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Non-Whites</u>
Familiar (5, 6 or 7 rating)	24%	40%
Neither Familiar nor unfamiliar (4 rating)	19	27
Not Familiar (1, 2 or 3 rating)	56	32
Mean Rating	3.25	3.92

No significant differences are found between whites and non-whites when "fairness" questions are asked such as the following:

"In general, people are treated fairly within the Washington State Court System"

	White <u>N=728</u>	Non-Whites <u>N=62</u>
Mean rating ¹	5.00	5.02

"Whites and non-whites are treated with equal fairness"

	White <u>N=728</u>	Non-Whites <u>N=62</u>
Mean rating ¹	4.36	4.21

Demographically, whites and non-whites are similar in all areas but income and education. The average income for whites is \$30,900 compared to \$23,800 for non-whites. Nineteen percent (19%) of white residents are college graduates compared to 6% of non-white residents.

The average length of residence for white respondents is slightly longer than for non-whites respondents (29.1 years vs. 26.9 years).

Eighty percent (80%) of white residents are registered to vote compared to 69% of non-white residents.

¹ Using a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 = "strongly agree" and 7 = "strongly disagree".

Demographic Profile of White and Non-White Residents

	White N=728	Non-Whites N=62
Sex:		
Male	50%	47%
Female	50	53
Age:		
18-34	35%	47%
35-54	37	23
55-64	14	10
65+	14	19
Mean	43.6	42.6
Marital Status:		
Married	63%	53%
Not married	37	47
Education:		
High school or less	38%	48%
Some college/technical school	33	40
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	19	6
graduate school	10	5

	White N=728	Non-Whites N=62
Occupation:		
Retired	20%	13%
Professional	17	10
Service worker	13	11
Homemaker	10	16
Manager/administrator	10	13
Laborer	8	8
Sales	5	6
Student	5	6
Unemployed	2	3
Clerical	2	--
Self-employed	2	--
Crafts	2	3
Operative	1	3
Military	1	2

Annual Household Income:

Under \$15,000	18%	32%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	22	27
\$25,000 - \$34,999	22	19
\$35,000 - \$44,999	15	5
\$45,000 or more	16	10

Mean (in dollars)	\$30,900	\$23,800
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Length of Residence in
Washington:

Mean (in years)	29.1	26.9
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Registered to vote
in Washington:

80%	69%
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Political affiliation:

Conservative	34%	34%
Moderate	41	40
Liberal	21	18

	White N=728	Non-Whites N=62
Region of Residence:		
Western Washington	67%	69%
Eastern Washington	25	15
Southwest Washington	7	16
Type of Residence:		
Urban	32%	35%
Suburban	37	40
Rural	31	23
Cultural/Ethnic Background:		
Caucasian	100%	--
Native American	--	37
Black	--	21
Asian	--	15
Hispanic	--	15
Community Activism:		
Active participant ¹	41%	32%
None	59	68

¹ Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

X. INFORMATION ABOUT COURT SYSTEM

X. INFORMATION ABOUT COURT SYSTEM

Source of Information About Courts

Washington residents receive information about Washington courts from a number of different sources. The most popular source is newspapers. Three-quarters (75%) of all residents get the majority of their information about courts from newspapers. Television news is another popular source--more than one-half (54%) receive information from television news. One-quarter of the residents receive the majority of their information from word of mouth (25%) and 10% from personal experience. Radio news is where 12% of the residents receive their information about courts.

Less than 5% of all residents receive the majority of their information about Washington courts from lawyers, school, magazines, jury duty, television documentaries and judges

Satisfaction With Amount of Information Currently Receiving

Most Washington residents would like to receive more information about Washington courts (69%). Only 2% would like less information and 28% are satisfied with the current amount of information they are receiving.

Preferred Sources of Information

Residents most frequently prefer to receive information about the courts from newspapers (43%) and television news (31%). Nearly one-fifth (19%) of the residents would like to receive literature through the mail and 15% from pamphlets distributed in public places such as the post office or library. A number of other sources are mentioned but far less frequently.

A demographic profile of those who specifically state they want more information from pamphlets distributed in public places and radio are provided on pages 95-97.

Preferred Types of Information

When asked for the type of information residents would like to have provided, they mention a wide variety of different subject matter. Those mentioned most frequently include the following:

- How the court system works
- Judicial decisions

- General information about courts
- Changes in laws

Lawyers as a Source of Information

Two-thirds (67%) of all Washington residents either rely or would rely on lawyers as a source of information about Washington courts. Those relying on lawyers for information are more likely to be female (51% vs 43%), and have annual household incomes under \$15,000 (21% vs 13%).

Confidence in Various Sources of Information

Washington residents are asked to rate the accuracy of various sources of information in terms of providing information about Washington courts, using a seven-point scale, where one is "not at all accurate" and seven is "very accurate". The two sources of information from which residents feel they would receive the most accurate information are judges and television documentaries (80% and 78%, respectively, offer a 5, 6 or 7 rating). Other sources viewed as providing accurate information are pamphlets distributed in public places and information provided in schools (66% and 69%, respectively).

It is interesting to note, the sources viewed as providing the most accurate information are not the sources from which residents currently receive the majority of their information about Washington courts or their preferred sources of information. The most popular sources of information, newspapers and television news, receive a slightly lower accuracy rating--58% and 61%, respectively.

While the majority of residents currently use or would use lawyers as a source of information about courts, only 64% believe the information lawyers provide is accurate, which is significantly lower than sources such as judges (80%) and TV documentaries (78%).

Radio news, like other news media, receives a relatively low accuracy rating--58% believe the information provided by radio news is accurate.

Residents generally do not feel information provided by special interest groups are accurate--only one-third (34%) rate special interest groups as a source which would provide accurate information.

Information About Judges

Two-thirds of all residents would like to receive more information about Washington State judges (67%). Only 4% would like less information and 28% are satisfied with the amount of information they currently receive about judges.

When asked what type of information about judges they would like to have provided, residents most frequently desire information regarding the background of judges and candidates, as well as judicial decisions (42% and 39%, respectively). Other types of information desired includes: What the job entails/how many hours judges work (17%), the experience and qualification of judges (10%), their sentencing record/decisions (10%) and how judges stand on various issues (8%). Of lesser interest are the moral character of judges (5%) and the types of cases heard (5%).

Question: Where do you get most of your information about Washington Courts?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Newspaper	75%
Television news	54
Word of mouth	25
Radio news	12
Personal experience	10
Lawyers/attorneys	4
School	4
Magazines	4
Jury duty	4
Television documentaries	3
Books/library	2
Judges	2
Brochures from elected officials/ voter's pamphlets	2
All other sources receive less than 2% of the responses	

Multiple mentions permitted, therefore percentages may exceed 100%.

Question: Would you like to receive more, less or the same amount of information about Washington Courts?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
More	69%
Less	2
Same	28
Don't know	1

Question: How would you like to receive information about Washington Courts?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Newspaper	43%
Television news	31
Through the mail	19
Pamphlets distributed in public places such as the post office or library	15
Brochure/pamphlet/newsletter	9
Radio news	9
Television documentaries	5
Magazine	3
Information provided in schools	2
TV cameras in courtroom	2
Special interest groups	2
Public services spots on television	2
Pamphlets like the voter's handbook from Washington State	2
Word of mouth	1
Books	1
Lectures/seminars/public workshops	1
Television entertainment programs (i.e. sitcoms and dramas)	1
Lawyers/attorneys	1
Judges	1
All other sources receive less than 1% of the responses	

Question: Specifically, what information would you like to have provided?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
How the system/court works	15%
Judicial decisions	13
General information	13
Changes in law	12
Sentencing guidelines	8
Background/record of judges or candidates	7
Laws	6
Where to find more specific information if needed	4
Case verdict/sentencing	4
Evaluation of judges	4
Review of cases	4
All other mentions receive less than 4% of the responses.	

Demographic Profile of Residents Who
Want More Information About The Court System
Through Pamphlets and Radio

	<u>Want information from</u>	
	<u>Pamphlets</u>	<u>Radio</u>
	<u>N=117</u>	<u>N=74</u>
Sex:		
Male	41%	43%
Female	59	47
Age:		
18-34	46%	34%
35-54	34	34
55-64	14	14
65+	5	16
Mean	38.4	44.2
Marital Status:		
Married	57%	65%
Not married	43	35
Education:		
High school or less	36%	27%
Some college/technical school	35	43
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	19	18
graduate school	10	12

Want information from

<u>Pamphlets</u>	<u>Radio</u>
<u>N=117</u>	<u>N=74</u>

Occupation:

Retired	12%	20%
Professional	16	20
Service worker	19	18
Homemaker	16	7
Manager/administrator	9	12
Laborer	8	8
Sales	7	1
Student	5	4
Unemployed	3	--
Clerical	3	3
Self-employed	--	4
Crafts	2	1
Operative	1	--
Military	--	--

Annual Household Income:

Under \$15,000	25%	16%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	26	20
\$25,000 - \$34,999	16	22
\$35,000 - \$44,999	16	18
\$45,000 or more	11	23

Mean (in dollars)	\$27,500	\$33,600
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Length of Residence in
Washington:

Mean (in years)	25.3	30.8
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Registered to vote
in Washington:

74%	81%
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Political affiliation:

Conservative	30%	31%
Moderate	43	45
Liberal	21	20

Want information from

<u>Pamphlets</u>	<u>Radio</u>
<u>N=117</u>	<u>N=74</u>

Region of Residence:

Western Washington	71%	65%
Eastern Washington	19	26
Southwest Washington	9	9

Type of Residence:

Urban	27%	32%
Suburban	42	35
Rural	29	32

Cultural/Ethnic Background:

Caucasian	90%	95%
Native American	2	1
Black	4	3
Asian	1	--
Hispanic	--	--

Community Activism:

Active participant ¹	33%	47%
None	67	53

¹ Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

Question: Do you or would you rely on lawyers as a source of information about Washington Courts?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Yes	67%
No	29
Don't know	4

Demographic Profile of Residents Who
Do and Do Not Rely on Lawyers for Information

	Rely on Lawyers N=538	Do Not Rely on Lawyers N=230
Sex:		
Male	49%	57%
Female	51	43
Age:		
18-34	37%	34%
35-54	36	36
55-64	13	13
65+	14	13
Mean	42.9	44.0
Marital Status:		
Married	61%	64%
Not married	38	36
Education:		
High school or less	38%	39%
Some college/technical school	32	35
College graduate (4 yrs) Attended/completed	18	19
graduate school	11	7

	<u>Rely on Lawyers N=538</u>	<u>Do Not Rely on Lawyers N=230</u>
Occupation:		
Retired	18%	19%
Professional	18	13
Service worker	12	13
Homemaker	9	11
Manager/administrator	12	8
Laborer	7	11
Sales	4	7
Student	5	5
Unemployed	3	3
Clerical	3	1
Self-employed	3	2
Crafts	2	2
Operative	1	2
Military	1	2
Annual Household Income:		
Under \$15,000	21%	13%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	21	26
\$25,000 - \$34,999	21	21
\$35,000 - \$44,999	14	16
\$45,000 or more	16	14
Mean (in dollars)	\$30,600	\$30,400
Length of Residence in Washington:		
Mean (in years)	29.2	27.5
Registered to vote in Washington:		
	78%	82%
Political affiliation:		
Conservative	32%	37%
Moderate	41	40
Liberal	22	18

	Rely on Lawyers <u>N=538</u>	Do Not Rely on Lawyers <u>N=230</u>
Region of Residence:		
Western Washington	69%	63%
Eastern Washington	23	27
Southwest Washington	7	10
Type of Residence:		
Urban	38%	33%
Suburban	32	33
Rural	29	32
Cultural/Ethnic Background:		
Caucasian	91%	91%
Native American	3	2
Black	1	3
Asian	1	*
Hispanic	1	1
Community Activism:		
Active participant ¹	41%	40%
None	59	60

* Less than 1%

1 Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

Question: How accurate do you feel the information about Washington Courts would be from the following sources? (1 to 7 scale, 1 = "not at all accurate", 7 = "very accurate")

	Total Mean Ratings <u>N=800</u>	% Who Believe Information Is Accurate ¹ <u>N=800</u>
Judges	5.57	80%
TV Documentaries	5.26	78
Pamphlets distributed in public places	5.11	66
Information provided in schools	5.08	69
Lawyers	4.86	64
Television news	4.67	61
Radio news	4.65	58
Newspaper	4.59	58
Special interest group	3.83	34

¹ Accurate = 5, 6 or 7 rating

Question: Would you like to receive more, less or the same amount of information about judges in Washington State?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
More	67%
Less .	4
Same	28
Don't know	1

Question: What type of information about judges would you like to have provided?

	Total <u>N=800</u>
Background of judges or candidates	42%
Judicial decisions	39
What does the job entail/ hours they work	17
Experience/qualifications	10
Sentencing record/decisions	10
How they stand on issues	8
Moral character	5
Types of cases heard	5
All other mentions receive less than 5% of the re- sponses	

XI. MEDIA HABITS

XI. MEDIA HABITS

Daily Newspapers Read

To measure newspaper readership among Washington State residents, respondents are asked which, if any, daily newspapers they have read in the past 7 days.

Statewide, The Seattle Times (35%) Seattle P-I (25%), Spokesman Review/Spokane Chronicle (11%) and Tacoma News Tribune (10%) are the daily newspapers which reach the greatest number of residents.

Daily newspaper reach varies by region. Western Washington residents read The Seattle Times (48%), Seattle P.I. (33%) Tacoma News Tribune (15%) and Everett Herald/Western Sun (9%). Eastern Washington residents read Spokesman Review/Spokane Chronicle (43%), Yakima Herald Republic (17%) and Tri-City Herald (16%). Residents of Southwest Washington read The Oregonian (50%), Centralia Daily Chronicle (22%), Columbia Basin Herald (16%), Longview Daily News (14%), and Vancouver Columbian (11%).

Examining daily newspaper readership by type of residential area reveals no significant differences between urban, suburban and rural dwellers with the exception of The Seattle Times. The Seattle Times is read by more urban and suburban dwellers (40% and 39%, respectively) which compared to rural dwellers (23%).

Sunday Newspaper Readership

To measure Sunday newspaper readership, Washington residents are asked which, if any, Sunday newspapers they usually read.

Statewide, The Seattle Times/P-I (45%), Spokesman Review/Spokesman Chronicle (10%) and Tacoma News Tribune (9%) reach the most Washington State residents.

As with daily newspapers, Sunday newspaper readership also varies by region. Western Washington residents generally read The Seattle Times/P-I (60%), and Tacoma News Tribune (14%). Eastern Washington residents read Spokesman Review/Spokane Chronicle (40%), Yakima Herald Republic (16%), Tri-City Herald (12%) and The Seattle Times/P-I (10%). Southwest Washington residents read The Oregonian (50%), Vancouver Columbian (28%), Columbia Basin Herald (16%) and The Seattle Time/P-I (11%).

Again, The Seattle Times/P-I is the only Sunday newspaper which exhibits a difference in readership among urban, suburban and rural dwellers. Residents living in urban and suburban areas are more likely to read the Sunday edition of The Seattle Times/P-I than those residing in rural areas (48% and 50% vs. 32%).

Radio Stations Listened to For News

As may be expected, news radio listenership is highly fragmented in Washington State.

Statewide, KIRO reaches 18% of Washington residents. No other radio station reaches more than 10% of the state's population. Even on a regional basis, only a few stations reach a significant share of the listening audience. KIRO reaches 26% of Western Washington residents and KGW reaches 16% of Southwest Washington residents. No other stations reach more than 10% of each region's population.

KIRO is the one radio station which tends to reach more urban and suburban dwellers than rural dwellers (19% and 21% vs. 13%). Listenership among all other radio stations remains consistent between different types of residential areas.

Local Television Stations Watched For News

On a statewide basis, the television stations watched most often for news include KIRO (CBS, Ch. 7, Seattle -- 22%), KING (NBC, Ch. 5, Seattle -- 20%), and KOMO (ABC, Ch. 4, Seattle -- 17%).

Differences are also evident when examining local television station viewership. Three major stations dominate the Western Washington market -- KIRO (CBS, Ch. 7, Seattle -- 31%), KING (NBC, Ch. 5, Seattle -- 28%), and KOMO (ABC, Ch. 4, Seattle -- 22%). In Eastern Washington, the three network affiliates are viewed most frequently for news, however, the stations reach a smaller proportion of the market than Western Washington stations; KHQ (NBC, Ch. 6, Spokane -- 15%), KXLY (ABC, Ch. 4, Spokane and KREM (CBS, Ch. 2, Spokane -- 9%). Portland, Oregon, stations are generally viewed by Southwest Washington residents for news -- KOIN (CBS, Ch. 6, Portland -- 28%), KATU (ABC, Ch. 2, Portland -- 14%), and KGW (NBC, Ch. 8, Portland -- 9%).

No significant differences in television station viewership exist between urban, suburban and rural dwellers.

Time of Day Watch Local Daily News

Early evening news between 5:00 and 6:00 pm is the newscast most Washington residents watch; nearly two-thirds (65%) of all residents can be reached at this time.

All other newscasts reach a considerably smaller audience -- late night news (10:00 pm or 11:00 pm; 37%), evening between 6:30 pm and 7:00 pm (26%) , early morning news (15%) and mid-day news (7%).

Some differences also exist regionally. Southwest and Eastern Washington residents are slightly more likely to be reached by early evening news than Western Washington residents (72% and 71% vs. 62%). Southwest residents are also more likely to watch late night news (45%) than those residing in either Western or Eastern Washington (36% and 34%, respectively).

Examination of time of day news is watched by type of residents reveals no significant differences. Urban, suburban and rural dwellers all respond similarly.

Question: Which, if any, daily newspapers have you read in the past 7 days?

	Western Total N=800	Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
Seattle Times	35%	48%	6%	8%
Seattle PI	25	33	7	11
Spokesman Review/ Spokane Chronicle	11	*	43	2
Tacoma News Tribune	10	15	--	--
Everett Herald/ Western Sun	6	9	--	--
Oregonian	5	*	2	50
USA Today	5	4	6	3
Yakima Herald Republic	4	--	17	--
Tri-City Herald	4	*	16	--
Centralia Daily Chronicle	2	*	1	22
Columbian Basin Herald	2	*	1	16
Longview Daily News	1	--	--	14
Vancouver Columbian	1	*	--	11
None	7	7	6	6

* Less than 1%

Question: Which, if any, Sunday newspapers do you usually read?

	Western Total N=800	Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
Seattle Times/PI	45%	60%	10%	11%
Spokesman Review/ Spokane Chronicle	10	--	40	--
Tacoma News Tribune	9	14	--	--
Oregonian	5	*	2	50
Yakima Herald Republic	4	--	16	--
Tri-City Herald	3	*	12	--
Vancouver Columbian	2	--	--	28
Columbian Basin Herald	1	*	--	16
None	14	15	13	14

* Less than 1%

Question: Which, if any, radio stations do you listen to most often for news?

	Western Total N=800	Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
KIRO	18%	26%	2%	2%
KOMO-AM	7	9	--	3
KING-AM	3	4	1	--
KUBE	2	2	--	--
KUOW	2	2	--	--
KXLY	1	*	5	--
KGW	1	--	--	16
None	23	25	20	20

* Less than 1%

Question: Which, if any, local television station do you watch most often for news? (One mention)

	Western Total N=800	Eastern Washington N=540	Southwest Washington N=192	Washington N=64
KIRO (CBS, Ch. 7, Seattle)	22%	31% ⁵	4%	6%
KING (NBC, Ch. 5, Seattle)	20	28	2	3
KOMO (ABC, Ch. 4, Seattle)	17	22	7	8
KHQ (NBC, Ch. 6, Spokane)	4	--	15	2
KSTW (Ind., Ch. 11, Seattle)	3	3	2	5
CNN (Ch. 2, Cable News Network)	3	2	4	2
KOIN (CBS, Ch. 6, Portland)	3	*	1	28
KXLY (ABC, Ch. 4, Spokane)	3	--	10	--
KREM (CBS, Ch. 2, Spokane)	2	--	9	--
KATU (ABC, Ch. 2, Portland)	1	*	1	14
KGW (NBC, Ch. 8, Portland)	1	--	--	9
None	6	7	4	5

* Less than 1%

Question: Which, if any, times of the day do you usually watch a local television newscast?

	Total N=800	Western Washington N=540	Eastern Washington N=192	Southwest Washington N=64
Early evening between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm	65%	62%	71%	72%
Late night at 10:00 pm or 11:00 pm	37	36	34	45
Evening between 6:30 pm and 7:00 pm	26	20	25	23
Early morning	15	14	19	13
Midday	7	8	4	11
None	6	6	6	3

Multiple mentions permitted, therefore percentages may exceed 100%

XII. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

XII. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

	Total N=800	Western Wash- ington N=540	Eastern Wash- ington N=192	Southwest Wash- ington N=64
Sex:				
Male	50%	50%	51%	52%
Female	50	50	49	48
Age:				
18-34	35%	35%	37%	34%
35-54	36	34	41	31
55-64	13	13	13	11
65+	15	16	9	23
Mean	43.6	44.1	41.2	45.9
Marital Status:				
Married	62%	60%	65	70%
Not married	37	39	35	30
Education:				
High school or less	38%	37%	41%	42%
Some college/ technical school	33	32	36	33
College graduate (4 yrs)	18	20	15	9.
Attended/completed graduate school	10	9	8	16

Occupation:	Total N=800	Western Wash- ington N=540	Eastern Wash- ington N=192	Southwest Wash- ington N=64
Retired	19%	20%	15%	25%
Professional	16	17	14	17
Service worker	12	12	12	14
Homemaker	10	10	12	9
Manager/ administrator	10	12	6	3
Laborer	8	7	8	14
Sales	5	6	5	2
Student	5	3	8	5
Unemployed	3	2	3	2
Clerical	2	2	3	3
Self-employed	2	2	3	3
Crafts	2	2	2	--
Operative	2	1	3	2
Military	1	1	2	--

Annual Household Income:

Under \$15,000	19%	18%	22%	17%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	23	20	29	27
\$25,000 - \$34,999	21	24	14	23
\$35,000 - \$44,999	15	14	16	17
\$45,000 or more	16	18	11	12
Mean (in thousands)	\$30.3	\$31.6	\$27.5	\$28.5

Length of Residence in
Washington:

Mean (in years)	29.0	30.1	25.2	31.0
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Registered to vote
in Washington:

79%	79%	80%	75%
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Political affiliation:

Conservative	33%	32%	37%	36%
Moderate	41	41	40	45
Liberal	21	23	17	14

	Total N=800	Western Wash- ington N=540	Eastern Wash- ington N=192	Southwest Wash- ington N=64
Region of Residence:				
Western Washington	68%	100%	--%	--%
Eastern Washington	24	--	100	--
Southwest Washington	8	--	--	100
Type of Residence:				
Urban	32%	33%	30%	30%
Suburban	37	40	32	27
Rural	30	26	36	42
Cultural/Ethnic Background:				
Caucasian	91%	91%	94%	83%
Native American	3	3	1	8
Black	2	2	--	--
Asian	1	1	1	3
Hispanic	1	1	2	3
Community Activism:				
Active participant ¹	40%	41%	41%	37%
None	60	59	59	63

¹ Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

Demographic Profile by Residential Area

	Urban N=256	Suburban N=296	Rural N=238
Sex:			
Male	53%	50%	47%
Female	47	50	53
Age:			
18-34	34%	39%	33%
35-54	33	35	39
55-64	14	11	15
65+	18	13	13
Mean	44.5	42.5	43.8
Marital Status:			
Married	51%	62%	76%
Not married	49	38	24
Education:			
High school or less	42%	30%	45%
Some college/ technical school	27	39	33
College graduate (4 yrs)	21	21	12
Attended/completed graduate school	10	9	9

	Urban N=256	Suburban N=296	Rural N=238
Occupation:			
Retired	22%	17%	18%
Professional	16	19	13
Service worker	13	11	14
Homemaker	9	8	14
Manager/ administrator	8	15	7
Laborer	10	6	8
Sales	4	7	4
Student	6	4	4
Unemployed	2	2	4
Clerical	2	2	3
Self-employed	3	2	2
Crafts	2	2	2
Operative	1	1	3
Military	1	1	1
Annual Household Income:			
Under \$15,000	20%	20%	18%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	26	20	22
\$25,000 - \$34,999	24	21	19
\$35,000 - \$44,999	11	14	20
\$45,000 or more	13	19	13
Mean (in thousands)	\$28.0	\$32.5	\$30.3
Length of Residence in Washington:			
Mean (in years)	28.8	28.9	29.2
Registered to vote in Washington:			
	79%	78%	81%
Political affiliation:			
Conservative	30%	36%	34%
Moderate	43	41	41
Liberal	23	19	21

	Urban N=256	Suburban N=296	Rural N=238
Region of Residence:			
Western Washington	70%	73%	59%
Eastern Washington	23	21	29
Southwest Washington	7	6	11

Type of Residence:

Urban	100%	--%	--%
Suburban	--	100	--
Rural	--	--	100

Cultural/Ethnic Background:

Caucasian	91%	91%	94%
Native American	2	4	3
Black	2	2	*
Asian	2	1	1
Hispanic	1	1	1

Community Activism:

Active participant ¹	41%	39%	43%
None	59	61	57

* Less than 1%

1 Have engaged in one of the following activities in the past 12 months:

- Written to an elected official about public business
- Taken an active part in a local community issue
- Written to an editor of a newspaper or magazine or to a TV or radio station
- Addressed a public meeting
- Actively worked for a political party

APPENDIX

Definition of Regions By County

Western Washington

Clallam
Grays Harbor
Island
Jefferson
King
Kitsap
Mason
Pierce
San Juan
Skagit
Snohomish
Thurston
Whatcom

Eastern Washington

Adams
Asotin
Benton
Chelan
Columbia
Douglas
Ferry
Franklin
Garfield
Grant
Kittitas
Klickitat
Lincoln
Okanogan
Pend Oreille
Spokane
Stevens
Walla Walla
Whitman
Yakima

Southwest Washington

Clark
Cowlitz
Lewis
Pacific
Skamania
Wahkiakum