

*In Loving Memory*

*of*

*Janice Lienhart*



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## **Foreword**

by

Larry Cohn, Executive Director, Alaska Judicial Council

The Alaska Judicial Council is a citizens' commission created by Alaska's constitution to nominate qualified persons for judgeships, to evaluate the performance of judges, and to make recommendations to improve the administration of justice. For the Council to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to evaluate judicial performance, it is essential for the Council to consider many sources of information including surveys of peace and probation officers, attorneys, court system employees, social workers, jurors and others. The Council also conducts public hearings and encourages all forms of public comment.

The Judicial Council evaluates judicial performance so that it may make recommendations to the public who vote on whether to retain judges. The Council's evaluations are not only important because they educate the public, they are also important because they are used to help educate judges. The Council provides detailed feedback on how judges may improve their own performance.

As the process suggests, the Judicial Council values the perspective of those whose experience makes them uniquely qualified to comment on judicial performance. At the same time, it is important for the Council to consider that the role of any particular person or group may affect the perspective of that person or group. The value of someone's experience with a judge also depends on whether that experience comprises many and different types of court proceedings or is more limited.

The Judicial Council relies on the experience of CourtWatch volunteers when it evaluates judicial performance. The experience of those who participate in the CourtWatch program is particularly valuable. That CourtWatch participants are volunteers manifests that they are keenly interested in a high level of judicial performance. The experience of most CourtWatch volunteers is broad-based. The volunteers observe many different judges in many different types of proceedings. CourtWatch volunteers are trained on the nature of judicial proceedings and on how to be a good observer of those proceedings. Finally, CourtWatch volunteers play no role in the court proceedings other than observers. For these reasons, the Judicial Council appreciates the work of CourtWatch volunteers as an independent and comprehensive source of information about judges.

## **CourtWatch Introduction**

The CourtWatch program was established in order to observe court procedures and participants in the courtroom. CourtWatchers make observations regarding the perceived skills and behaviors of the participants and the way the court system affects the lay people who enter it. Many of the ideas of the program are based upon suggestions from a 1978 Alaska Judicial Project called “A Look Inside” and the 1984 Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Crime Commission Report. The Alaska Judicial Council also indicated its support for the project to provide crucial public input into the judicial process.

The CourtWatch Program was implemented in 1988 by Victims for Justice. The program is made up of neutral, non-victim volunteers who represent a cross section of the community. They come from a variety of backgrounds including elementary, high school and university educators, an air traffic controller, realtors, homemakers, small business owners, Federal and State Government retirees, college students and various other professions. One goal is to evaluate Alaska’s justice system from the public’s point of view. It was felt our justice system needed more input from the community it serves. Another goal of the program is to observe that ALL parties are treated fairly: the victim, the witness, and the defendant.

While CourtWatchers use evaluation forms and a rating system, the program is not designed to “grade” anyone. Forms are used to provide continuity and to establish points of comparison. Ratings also help to give structure and guidelines to the CourtWatchers.

CourtWatchers are given an initial observation session in court with a trainer, then the actual 40 hour training session begins. The first session is held at the project office and focuses on the goals and responsibilities of the program. Training continues with an explanation of the judicial process itself — from arraignment to sentencing. It is important CourtWatchers understand the philosophy of the justice system, emphasizing the principles of law, not just the procedures. The roles of the judge, prosecutor, and defense attorneys are explained. The different phases of a trial are explained from the jury selection to the final summation. Training sessions are held in court with supervision by the director or assistant director, aimed at exposing the trainee to each different procedure: arraignments, jury selection, hearings, criminal and civil trials and sentencings.

Objectivity and impartiality are emphasized. They are taught to presume that the defendant is innocent unless the jury decides otherwise. Their role is not to pass judgment on the defendant, or to side with the victim. They are instructed to maintain an impartial attitude and not display emotions in the courtroom. They are trained in proper courtroom etiquette, emphasizing courtesy and open-mindedness.

Throughout the year CourtWatch holds continuing educational workshops. The purpose of these workshops is to reinforce the goals of the program, to iron out the flaws, to



further educate the CourtWatchers and to share information that would improve their efforts.

CourtWatchers make interesting comments on what they observe in the courtroom. It is the program's intent that these observations will be constructive, not destructive; to help shape a process which is efficient, professional and sensitive to the needs of the public it serves; and to educate and inform the public about the way the justice system is seen from a lay person's perspective.

In 2000, through grants from the Alaska Bar Foundation (IOLTA) and the Alaska Judicial Council, CourtWatch was able to expand into Palmer and Kenai. This is the first Report that has included evaluations from those areas.

This Biennial CourtWatch Report is the culmination of 24 months of observations in District and Superior Courtrooms in Anchorage, Kenai and Palmer.

## **Additional Information**

### **Expansion**

In the fall of 1999 the Alaska Judicial Council awarded a \$10,000 grant to CourtWatch for the expansion of the program into the Kenai and Palmer areas. During the spring and summer of 2000 and the spring of 2001 trainings were held in both areas. From March 2000 through February 2002 CourtWatch has conducted 278 evaluations consisting of 466 hours in Kenai and 186 evaluations consisting of 201 hours in Palmer. There has been very positive feedback from not only the Judges, but also the Public Defender Agencies, the District Attorney's offices and the private attorneys that practice in Kenai and Palmer. They have all participated in the training sessions and have assisted CourtWatch anytime we have asked. We appreciate their assistance and want to thank them for their encouragement. This is the first *Report* in which judges from those areas are included. CourtWatch hopes to expand into Southeast Alaska and the Interior in the near future.

Our expansion and growth is not just into new areas. We have a record number of volunteers that observe proceedings in the courtrooms in Anchorage, Kenai and Palmer. With our latest training that was held in May 2002, we have grown to thirty-one volunteers and are hoping to have forty after the September 2002 training session.

### **Graph information**

The graphs in the CourtWatch Report represent observation percentages by CourtWatch volunteers, not the overall caseload of each individual judge.

### **Judges hours and case type**

While CourtWatch volunteers strive to have an equal amount of evaluation hours per judge, it is impossible. Some judges are assigned a majority of civil cases which include probate and children's cases that are closed to the public. Other judges are assigned more criminal cases. Part of the criminal process is observing sentencings which provide the opportunity for a more comprehensive evaluation of the judge.

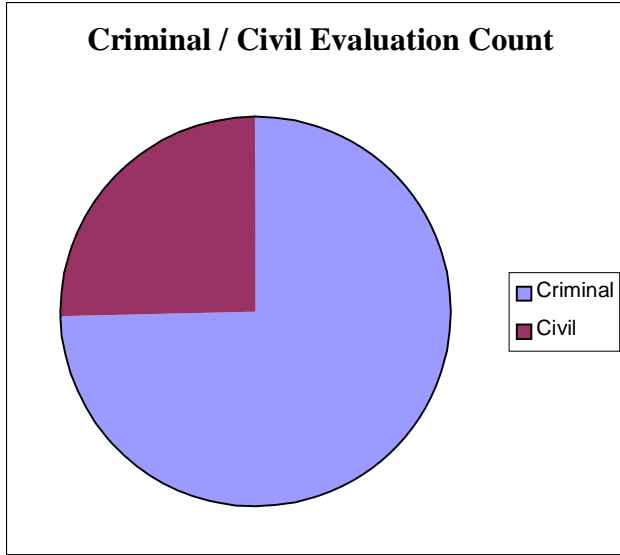
We are working hard to come to a more even balance in observing criminal versus civil proceedings.

### **CourtWatch facts**

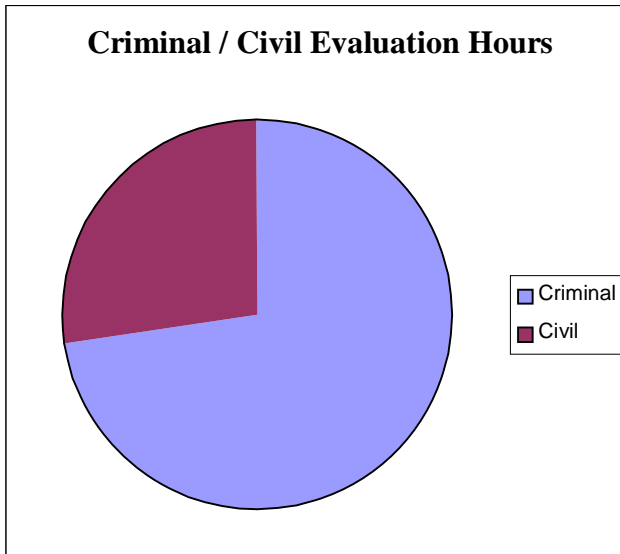
A total of 38 volunteers recorded 1876 hours of observation time during 1275 evaluations.

# CourtWatch Evaluations By Count and Hours

Data compiled from March 1, 2000 through February 28, 2002.



Criminal	951	75%
Civil	325	25%
Total	<u>1276</u>	<u>100%</u>



Criminal	1363:15	73%
Civil	514:59	27%
Total	<u>1878:14</u>	<u>100%</u>

## **The Judge's Evaluation Criteria**

The judge's evaluation form focuses on behavior and attitude.

### **DID THE JUDGE APPEAR TO PAY ATTENTION TO PROCEEDINGS AND PARTICIPANTS?**

Did the judge watch for restless or napping jurors? Did the judge pay attention to everyone: witnesses, attorneys, clerk, guard, defendant, victims and spectators?

### **DID THE JUDGE MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE COURTROOM?**

Is the jury quiet and attentive? Is the gallery quiet and in order? Did the judge make sure attorneys behave properly? Are disruptions or bursts of emotion controlled?

### **DID THE JUDGE SPEAK LOUDLY AND CLEARLY?**

Did the judge mumble or enunciate clearly? Can everyone hear the rulings and instructions?

### **WERE THE JUDGE'S REMARKS UNDERSTANDABLE AND DID THEY MAKE SENSE?**

Did the judge speak English or legalese? If a CourtWatcher cannot understand, then conceivably a juror, witness, victim or defendant might not understand. Were all present able to understand the remarks?

### **DID THE JUDGE SHOW HUMAN UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION TO THE VICTIM?**

Did the judge pay close attention to testimony? Was the judge sensitive to the victim's emotional situation? Was a recess called when a victim became emotional? Did the judge display negative actions to the victim? Did the judge treat the victim with respect and courtesy? Was the judge sensitive without infringing upon a defendant's rights, yet allow for victims to have their rights. Showing compassion and understanding of human nature, when appropriate, is a desirable trait. Also, be especially aware how the attitude is toward a non-present victim. Remember the victim may be deceased. Is the victim referred to by name or treated as a non-entity? Possibly the victim was barred from the courtroom?

### **DID THE JUDGE SHOW HUMAN UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION TO THE DEFENDANT?**

Did the judge pay close attention to testimony? Was the judge sensitive to the defendant's emotional situation? Did the judge display negative actions to the defendant? Did the judge treat the defendant with respect and courtesy? Showing compassion and understanding of human nature, when appropriate, is a desirable trait. Being able to distinguish between lies and the truth, real tears from "crocodile tears" and knowing the difference is a special quality in a good judge.

**DID THE JUDGE MAKE EXPLANATIONS TO THE PARTICIPANTS?**

Did the judge explain decisions, procedure, instructions and rights to those involved? At jury selection, are important items explained to prospective jurors (i.e., preponderance of evidence)? Are jury instructions clear and easy to follow? Is time taken to explain complicated questions to the witnesses, etc.?

**DID THE JUDGE TREAT ALL PARTIES FAIRLY AND PROFESSIONALLY?**

Did the judge remain firm, fair and objective? Did the judge treat attorneys with respect and as fellow professionals? Was the judge courteous? Were the judge's tone and actions impartial?

**DID THE JUDGE APPEAR TO FAVOR EITHER SIDE?**

Did the judge remain impartial in decisions, statements, attitudes and action? Did the judge insult or undermine either side? Did the judge unfairly overrule one side continually in deference to the other? Did the judge allow each side equal room to present his/her case?

**COMMENTS:**

CourtWatchers are encouraged to make constructive, complimentary or critical comments regarding the judge's performance. Quotes that explain or exemplify the comments are encouraged. These comments expressed by the volunteers are not necessarily the opinions of the CourtWatch program or Victims for Justice, but are statements of what and how individuals perceive personalities and procedures on any given day in court.

Scale

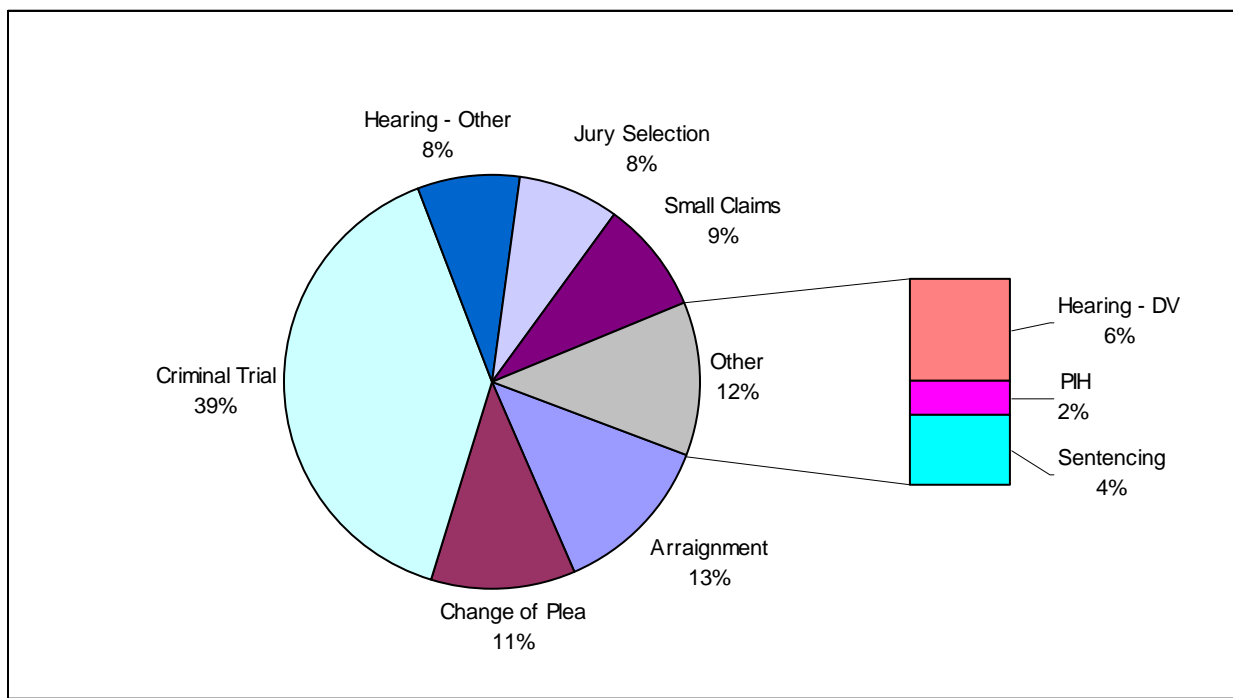
The CourtWatchers use a 1–5 scale in evaluating the judges.

- 1-Poor
- 2-Inadequate
- 3-Acceptable/Average
- 4-Good
- 5-Excellent

# The Honorable Samuel D. Adams

## Anchorage District Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	3.8
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.7
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.9
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	3.9
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>3.9</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	53 times
The defense:	1 time
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	5 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>5</b>

**Total observation time: 66.8 hours**

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Adams was appointed to the bench in September of 1999. Observers have watched him improve his overall demeanor and appearance on the bench. CourtWatch observers' perception was that he was inattentive mainly due to a lack of eye contact with courtroom participants. He takes the extra step to make sure victims have been notified of all court proceedings that would affect them.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 17 different CourtWatch volunteers during 54 observations over 66.8 hours. Judge Adams received 26 positive comments and 17 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Great job with all in courtroom. Firm yet polite.

Needs to remind defense attorney who wears the robe.

Made sure to see if victims had been notified. Made sure restitution arrangements were made.

He needs to have more eye contact with attorneys during the proceedings. He gives the impression he is not paying attention.

Judge Adams was very thorough about analyzing all evidence and explaining to defendants their rights. His manner conveyed a genuine concern to everyone involved.

Seemed bored at times by putting his hands back of his neck and rocking in his chair. Could not always hear him.

The judge kept the breaks to exactly what he said and was back in the courtroom and ready to go. Pays attention, is extremely courteous to both attorneys and defendant.

In all change of plea hearings, where there is an identified victim, Judge Adams asks the District Attorney if the victim had been notified of the plea agreement and had approved it.

A small group in back was noisy. He looked at them but said nothing.

Judge Adams did an exceptional job of explaining the role of mediators and encouraging parties to find a resolution through mediation. He is very thorough in awarding a final judgment so that all parties fully understand.

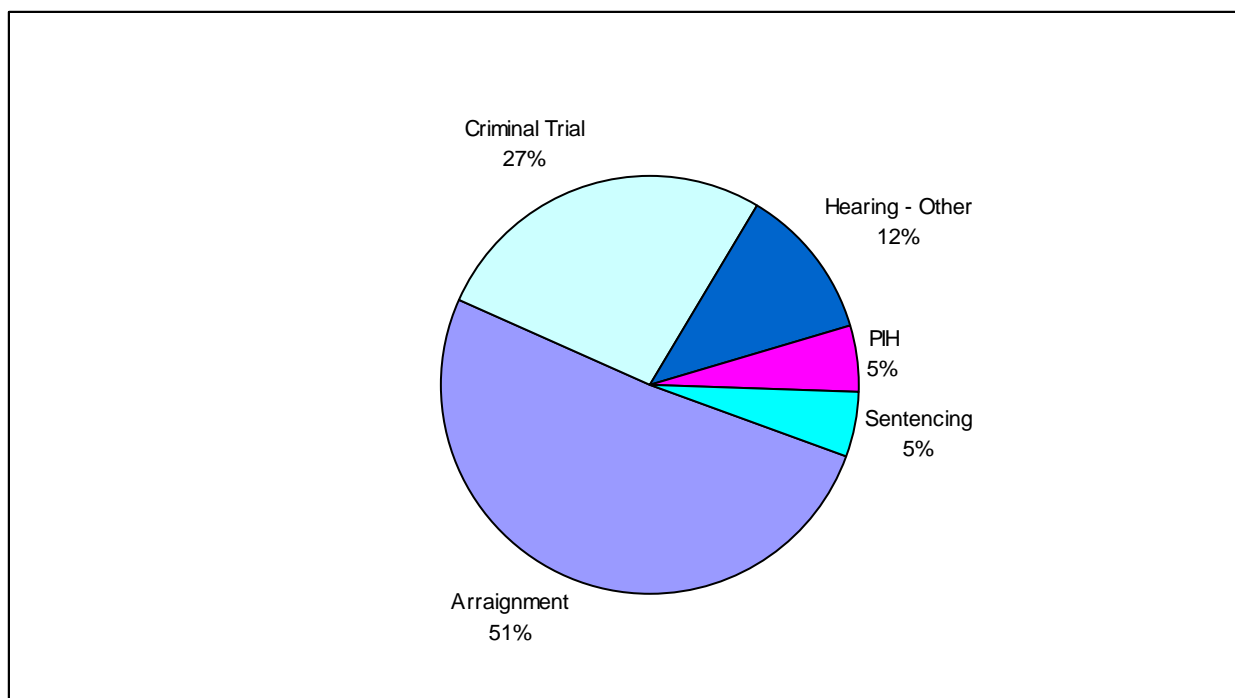
When judge leans back in his chair, the PA system does not pick up his voice. Back row of courtroom could not hear him...

Judge Adams did his best to move things along, hoping to finish today. His dry sense of humor seemed to be appreciated by the jurors. He told both attorneys that he would not allow this case to turn into a "dog and pony show."

He advised the defense attorney how to properly handle a gun. "Point it either up or down-not at the jury."

## The Honorable Elaine M. Andrews Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



#### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.4
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.8
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.2
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

#### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	39 times
The defense:	1 time
The prosecution:	1 time

#### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	2 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>2</b>

**Total observation time:** 53.8 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Andrews is seen as being attentive, efficient and in control of her courtroom. Five of the negative comments expressed by observers dealt with their inability to hear her during proceedings. She often voices her concerns regarding the safety of citizens when deciding bail or release of defendants to third party custodians.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 11 different CourtWatch volunteers during 41 observations over 53.8 hours. Judge Andrews received 24 positive comments and 9 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Very astute, controlled courtroom - intelligent approach to diverse situations.

Difficult to hear.

She is quick, precise and explains well. Controls her courtroom in a soft, yet firm way.

Judge Andrews is very patient - to a fault - the courtroom had loud noise in the gallery.

The judge was concerned about the risk to the community regarding a drug abuser who wanted his bail lowered. Bail remained as previously set.

Works hard to keep all sides working together. Very attentive.

Judge Andrews's diction is excellent - every word is clearly understandable - she never mumbles. She is an excellent judge in every respect.

Efficient - moved things along. Refused to modify 3rd party custodian ...until the victim was notified.

Firm regarding what was and wasn't to be included in jury instructions. Exacting, wanted clarifying language for the jurors.

Attentive, clear decisions.

Judge Andrews is fair, but does not let repeat offenders bargain for "small time". She questions third party custodians very thoroughly.

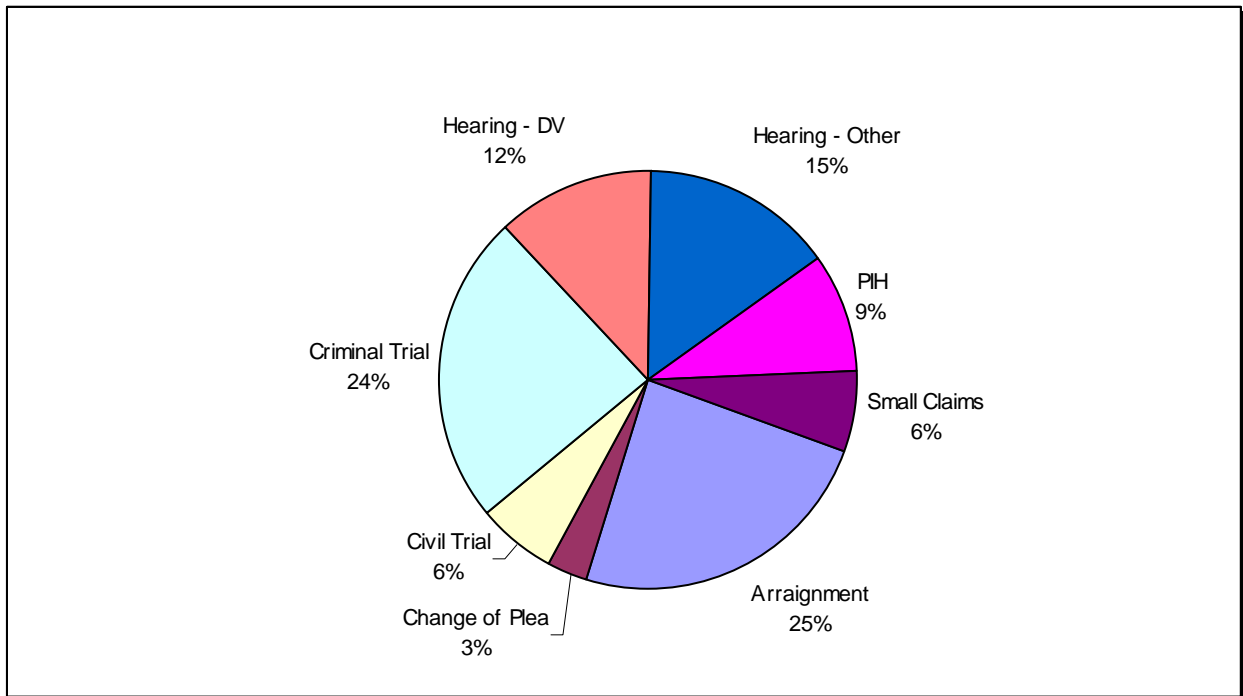
Quiet voice. Explained SIS too quickly.

Hard to hear her with her hand at her mouth.

Thoroughly explained her role as a sentencing judge to those in court. "It is with a sense of fairness and not mercy that I impose the following sentence."

# The Honorable Peter G. Ashman Anchorage District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.0
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.9
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.8
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.2
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.0</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	33 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	3 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>3</b>

**Total observation time:** 46.8 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Ashman garners high marks for his compassion and extreme patience on the bench. His two negative comments have to do with an inability to clearly hear him. He is seen as someone who always takes the time needed to assure that all involved understand his decisions.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 11 different CourtWatch volunteers during 33 observations over 46.8 hours. Judge Ashman received 20 positive comments and 2 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Paid close attention - constantly working – no idle time. Went into detail to defendant about his/her rights. Took attorney to task about being late.

Judge is alert and patient. He asked if there had been an offer in this case. Explained to the jury what was happening - clear and concise.

Not easy to hear.

Gave great comments to three 19-year-old people involved with DWI. Gave from the heart comments on life and possible future with alcohol.

Judge Ashman kept these arraignments moving. He is well spoken, gets to the bottom of each issue and his decisions are well explained. Perfect job today.

Judge Ashman is patient and handles difficult situations extremely well. His statements are to the point and compassionate.

I really respect and admire this judge. He is very caring and compassionate in his beliefs.

The judge took the time to explain what the legal terms meant when the defendant seemed confused as to their meaning. He is a very patient and understanding judge.

Tried to settle this very petty case. I don't think this judge can be beat with his calm, methodical manner.

Mumbles and soft voice.

Judge Ashman is always fair, calm and considerate. Well in control of courtroom.

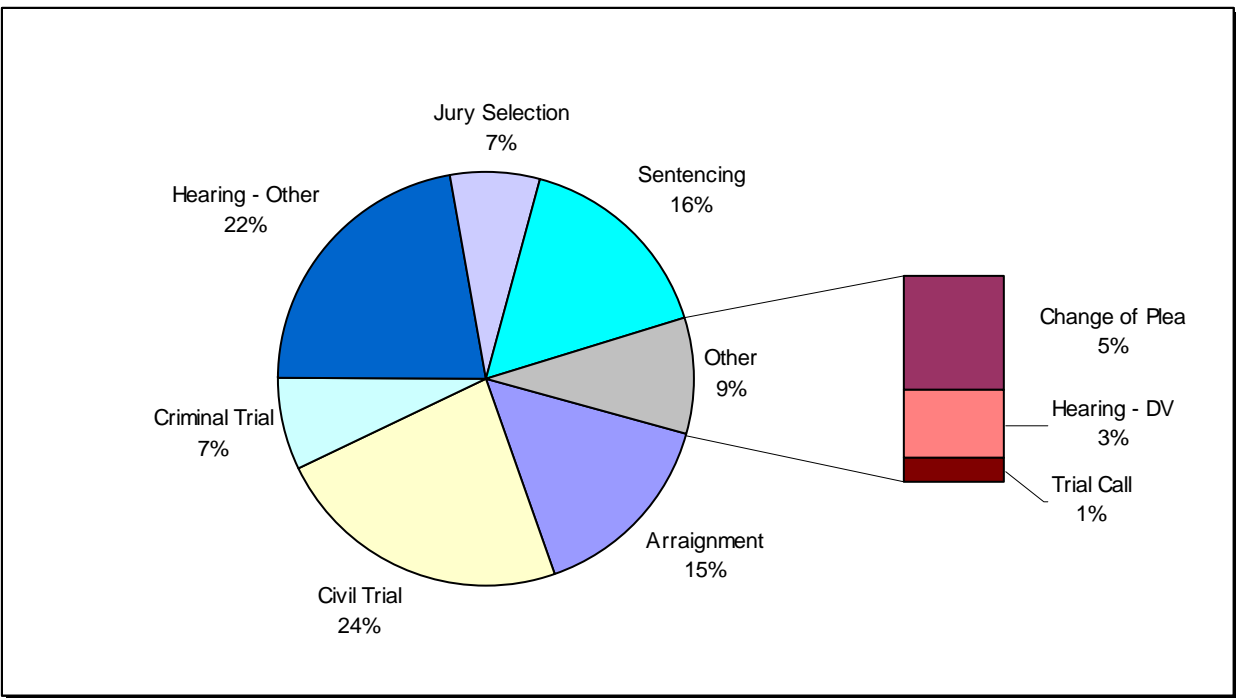
Judge was firm, worked to settle case without jury trial. Stated "this is a bad idea" ... to continue case due to \$500 difference in offers.

Each defendant was treated with compassion. Seems to cover all aspects of arraignments very well.

# The Honorable Harold M. Brown

## Kenai Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.1
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.1
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.3
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	91 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	2 times
Reasonable:	13 times
Severe:	none

### Total sentencings:

**Total observation time:** 183.1 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Brown is seen as fair and focused. CourtWatchers noted that he needed to remind the gallery to be quiet and respectful during testimony. His sense of humor is seen as having a calming effect on witnesses and others who are unfamiliar with the judicial process.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 6 different CourtWatch volunteers during 91 observations over 183.1 hours. Judge Brown received 47 positive comments and 5 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Could not have explained the process to jury or pro per any more thoroughly.

Attentive-explains his decisions-humor-yet stern.

Great job-except the noisy kid problem again.

Judge allowed all participants to speak as well as concerned friend and father of the defendant. Judge Brown did a very thorough job of sorting through flying accusations to get to the heart of the matter - which was the welfare of the children involved.

Seemed to be a bit confused with names today.

He was very forceful two different times with the defense attorney when she was argumentative. He was very reasonable and fair.

Judge fully explained purpose and responsibilities of jurors. Added humor to put potential jurors at ease. Asked clerk to outfit potential juror with earphones when he noticed some difficulty with hearing.

For this overall emotional case this judge was firm and stayed focused - GREAT JOB.

Needs to remind folks to take off their hats and act respectful in court.

Enraged at defense attorney for her conduct in court. Stated this case had gone on for too long (since 1997) and the victims deserved justice. He expressed great sympathy for the victims.

Judge did not notice mom and sister coaching witness on stand with head nods and shakes.

This was a three-hour sentencing - Judge deserves a medal for patience with this pro per defendant.

Asks questions to clarify witnesses' answers. Keeps all participants at ease during emotional times.

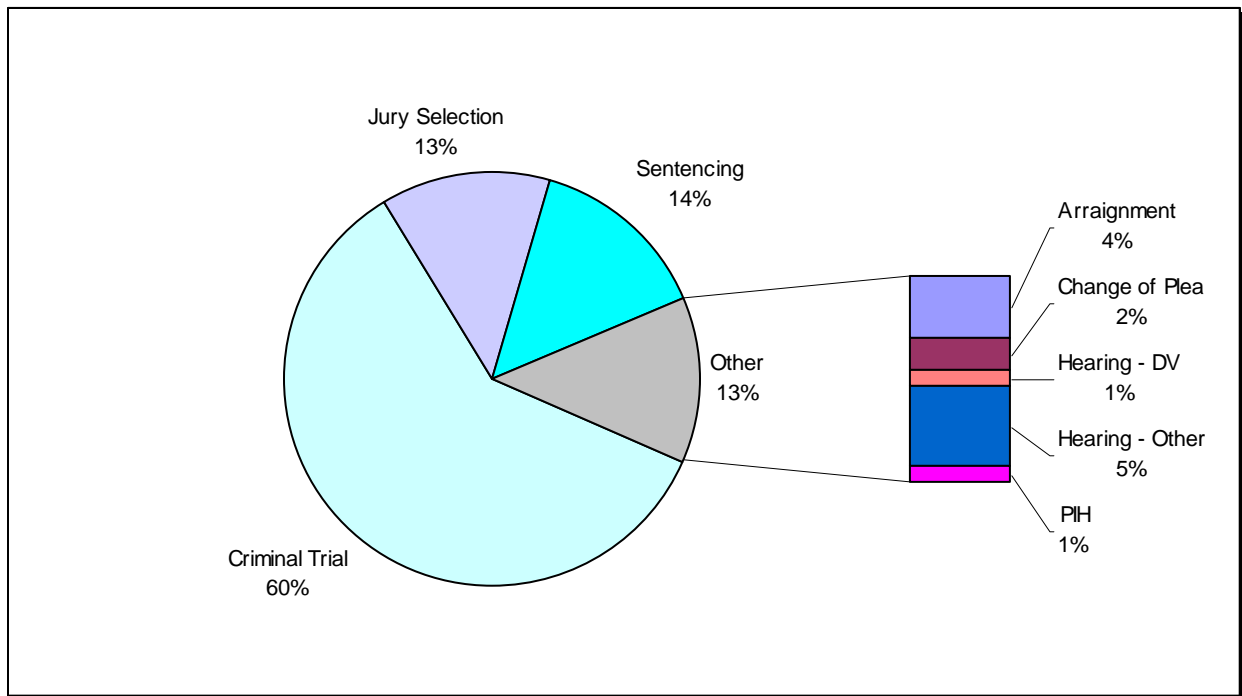
His humor keeps everyone at ease. Great explanation of "how a trial works."

Judge Brown seemed thoroughly in touch with all the details, dates, briefs, etc... associated with this case.

# The Honorable Larry D. Card

## Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.2
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.2
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	95 times
The defense:	1 time
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	19 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>19</b>

**Total observation time:** 146.0 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Card manages his courtroom with efficiency and fairness. Volunteers' main complaint centered on their inability to hear him because of the peripheral noise picked up by the microphone. His explanations to defendants, witnesses and victims are thorough and easy to understand.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 19 different CourtWatch volunteers during 97 observations over 146.0 hours. Judge Card received 71 positive comments and 19 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Judge Card is very attentive to the happenings in his courtroom.

Judge Card seemed to be leading the defense attorney through questioning, often prompting her to finish her statements...

Seemed fair. He was alert to what was going on in his courtroom. He made sure everyone understood the rules. He made sure all equipment that was to be used was in place. Very friendly.

Very loud paper rattling picked up by microphone.

Judge Card is a fair, astute judge. He is very much an advocate of children.

The judge was very active-kept court moving along. Clear and concise questions and directions.

"I cannot be insulated from the fact that the community cries out for greater punishment for these offenses." Microphone covered his speaking - attached to his tie and could hear every rattle of paper.

Judge Card kept control of what appeared to be an inexperienced defense attorney. When she seemed to be getting off track he would steer her back in the right direction.

Needs to make sure the gallery is quiet during testimony. Defendant's support people are loud and disrespectful and he did not say a word to them.

Judge Card is excellent in relating to people-it shows in every aspect of his courtroom.

Judge Card is always decisive. Controls his court with a firm but reasonable hand.

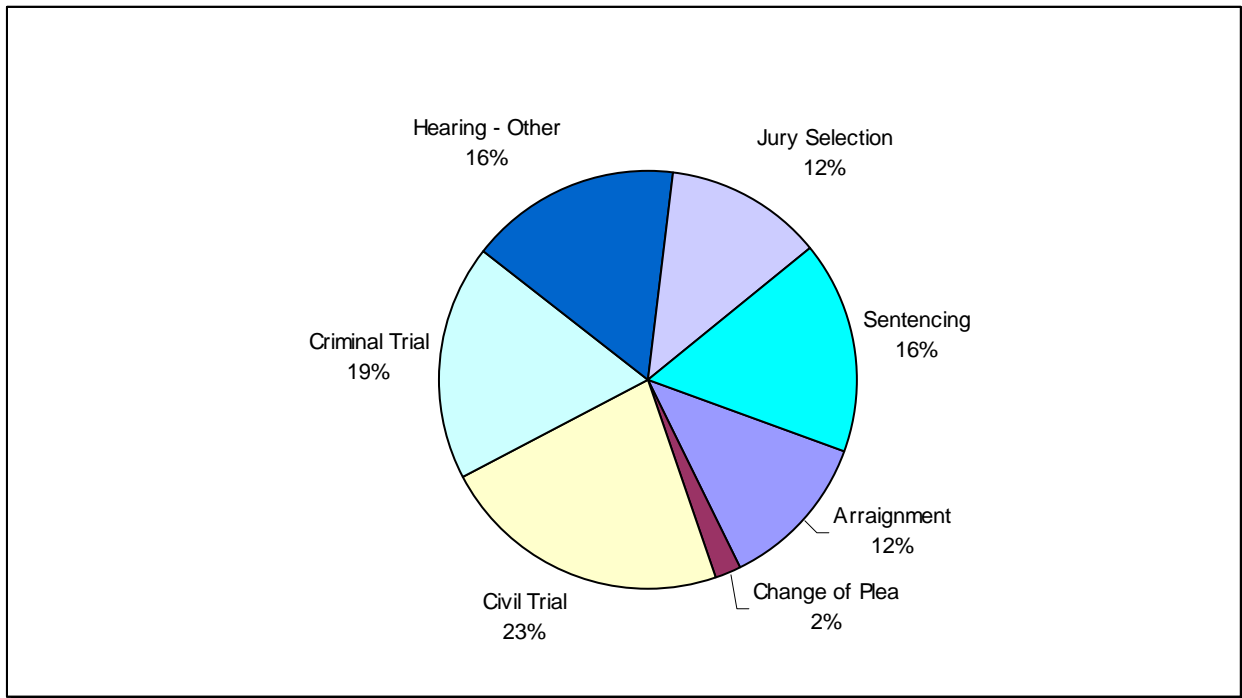
Difficult to hear today. Support people for defendant were sleeping-they need to snore somewhere else.

As always, Judge Card is in absolute control of his courtroom. He explains where in the law he finds the basis for his decisions and how he will proceed.

Very patient with District Attorney. Asked her to clarify herself many times. When she became angry he remained calm and polite. Nice job keeping her on track.

# The Honorable Beverly W. Cutler Palmer Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	3.7
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.6
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.8
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.6
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.6
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	3.9
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>3.8</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	49 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	9 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>9</b>

**Total observation time:** 46.1 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Cutler is seen as having a good rapport with jurors and takes the time needed to make detailed explanations to them. While she is seen as being concerned about time being wasted in her courtroom, some CourtWatchers report she seems to be inattentive and distracted at times.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 10 different CourtWatch volunteers during 49 observations over 46.1 hours. Judge Cutler received 26 positive comments and 19 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Was warm to potential jurors and explained their role.

Took time to explain legal technicalities to jury. Suggested to the defense that his continuing objections were slowing the process.

Seemed tired and bored. Laughing and passing notes to in-court clerk.

Judge Cutler advised both parties the cost of this litigation could be substantial and neither party needed costly legal fees. She tried very hard to steer parties to settle with each other if possible.

At times, during trial, Judge Cutler seemed to be giving a good deal of her attention to her computer screen.

Judge Cutler managed to put everyone at ease and yet stressed the importance of jury duty. She succeeded in keeping the process moving ahead and at the same time provided individuals breaks, one at a time.

Judge seemed minimally attentive to the proceedings. Speaks very softly, it is difficult to hear her in the gallery area.

Judge Cutler crafted an excellent sentence that fit the crime yet offered the defendant the opportunity to turn this first time offense into a rehabilitation opportunity. She carefully balanced the need for deterrence and enforcing societal norms with the rehabilitation prospects of defendant. She was both wise and fair in handling this case.

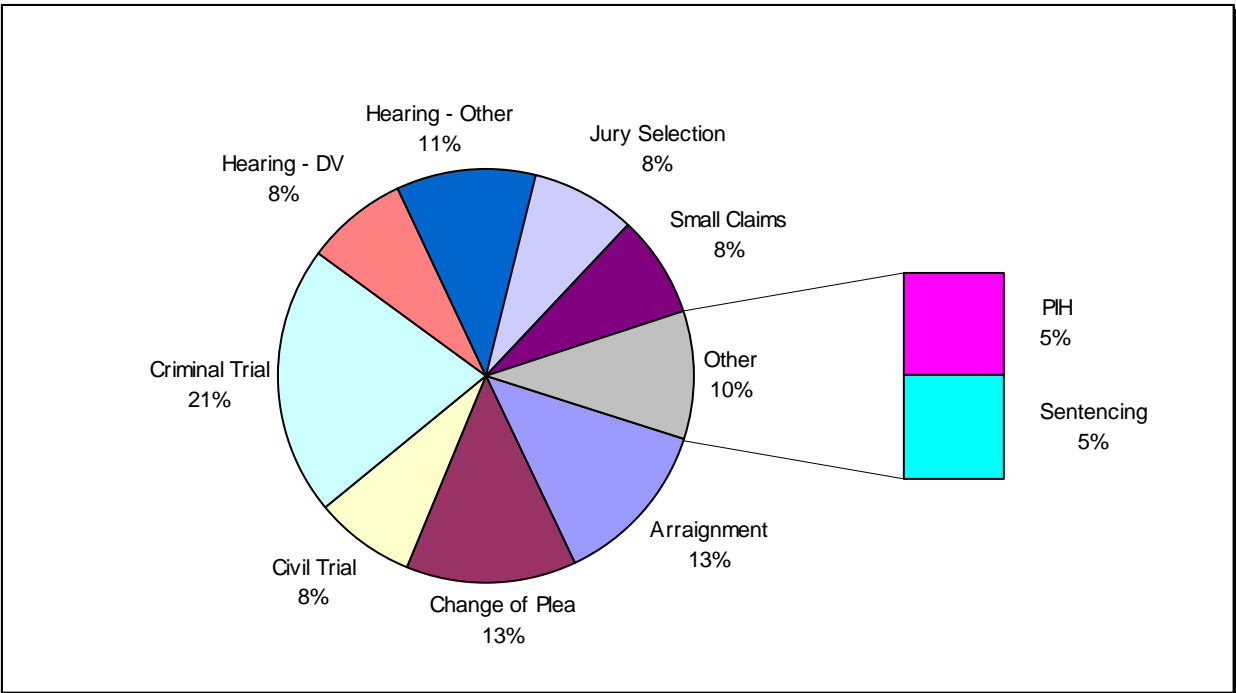
Judge Cutler listened intently to the victim's testimony and had carefully read her Victim's Impact Statement. Judge Cutler also paid close attention to the defendant's plea that he be incarcerated in a facility where he could continue to take his medications. The Judge issued a fair sentence that took into account the victim's concerns about a treatment program and restitution.

Judge Cutler arraigned three defendants. She did so with dispassionate efficiency. In observing her on the bench, one wonders if her many years of service have jaded her to the people appearing before her.

She appeared alert and attentive to the proceedings and asked the jury if they could hear the tape when a tape was being played.

# The Honorable Natalie K. Finn Anchorage District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.1
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.8
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.3
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	37 times
The defense:	1 time
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	2 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>2</b>

**Total observation time:** 47.1 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Finn's attention to her court is complete – she never seems to be “doing something else”. Frequently the CourtWatch observers could not hear her, witnesses or the attorneys well. Her explanations to all participants are thorough and easy for lay people to understand.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 10 different CourtWatch volunteers during 38 observations over 47.1 hours. Judge Finn received 27 positive comments and 7 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Judge is exceedingly clear on her explanations to the participants.

Nine cases - she kept things moving and was very patient.

Statements often so fast they are only heard and comprehended by attorneys.

Judge Finn carefully weighed the defendant's past and his future. Was clear in her decision. Great job today.

Needs to use microphone. Judge may have confused several defendants with "How do you want to take care of it?" instead of "How do you plead?"

Paid close attention to testimony of defendant. She was respectful and listened carefully. Good job.

Firm-but accommodating to attorneys. Explains to jury the etiquette of courtroom.

She has a very soft voice - hard to understand.

She was "in charge" of her courtroom.

Judge, as usual, is all business. Doesn't waste any time. Has a firm but pleasant manner towards all in her courtroom.

Judge Finn gave additional advice to several defendants regarding options other than jail, showing understanding to their problems. She explained the laws clearly to defendants in terms they could understand.

Could hardly hear a thing. Her collar microphone was laying on the podium.

Judge admonishes both attorneys to ask questions and get answers-not make commentary. Keeps good control of courtroom.

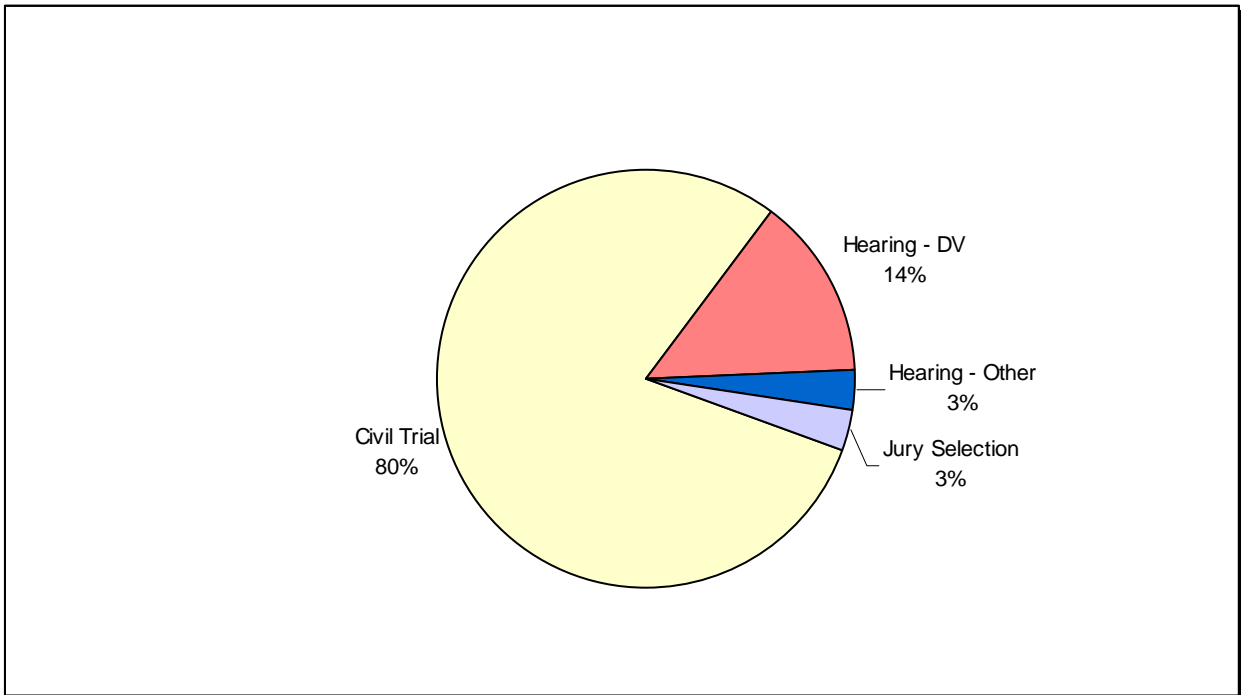
Judge kept parties from interrupting each other - was fair but firm. Judge had very good volume and spoke clearly and distinctly. Judge ensured that the parties involved knew what was happening, what testimony was appropriate and how to proceed.

Judge Finn had an excellent day in the DV Hearings. Compassionate and thorough.

# The Honorable Rene J. Gonzalez

## Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.2
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.2
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.6
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.3
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	29 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 50.3 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Gonzalez shows great concern for his juror's comfort. He is attentive, controls the courtroom and explains his decisions well. Several volunteers noted that his soft voice made it difficult for them to hear him. He takes the extra time to ask and answer questions in order to clarify statements made by participants. Judge Gonzalez recently retired.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 9 different CourtWatch volunteers during 30 observations over 50.3 hours. Judge Gonzalez received 23 positive comments and 7 negative comments.

## **Comments**

Judge was very attentive and made sure jurors were comfortable.

Asked lots of questions - showed "Domestic" statute to one person-very good with everyone in courtroom.

Judge reined in a petitioner who rambled on and on. Asked him to just answer the questions asked of him.

Needs to speak up-the end of his sentences run off and are quiet.

Judge Gonzalez never misses any statement and quotes them back verbatim to the participants.

Strong advocate for the children. Judge shows common sense values with his participants.

A good "old fashioned" judge. Doesn't need to demand respect-it is just given. Reprimanded plaintiffs about their comings and goings and the disruption it causes.

The judge seemed less empathetic to the one male petitioner - did not advise him on need to call police should the other party violate the restraining order, as he had cautioned earlier female petitioner.

Judge was very attentive, considerate and very professional.

Reprimanded defense attorney for poor behavior. Asked questions to clarify.

Kept close watch over proceedings. When the attorney asked how much time he had left for his closing remarks, the judge answered "11 minutes" immediately.

Rules quickly and explains his decisions well. Moves things along.

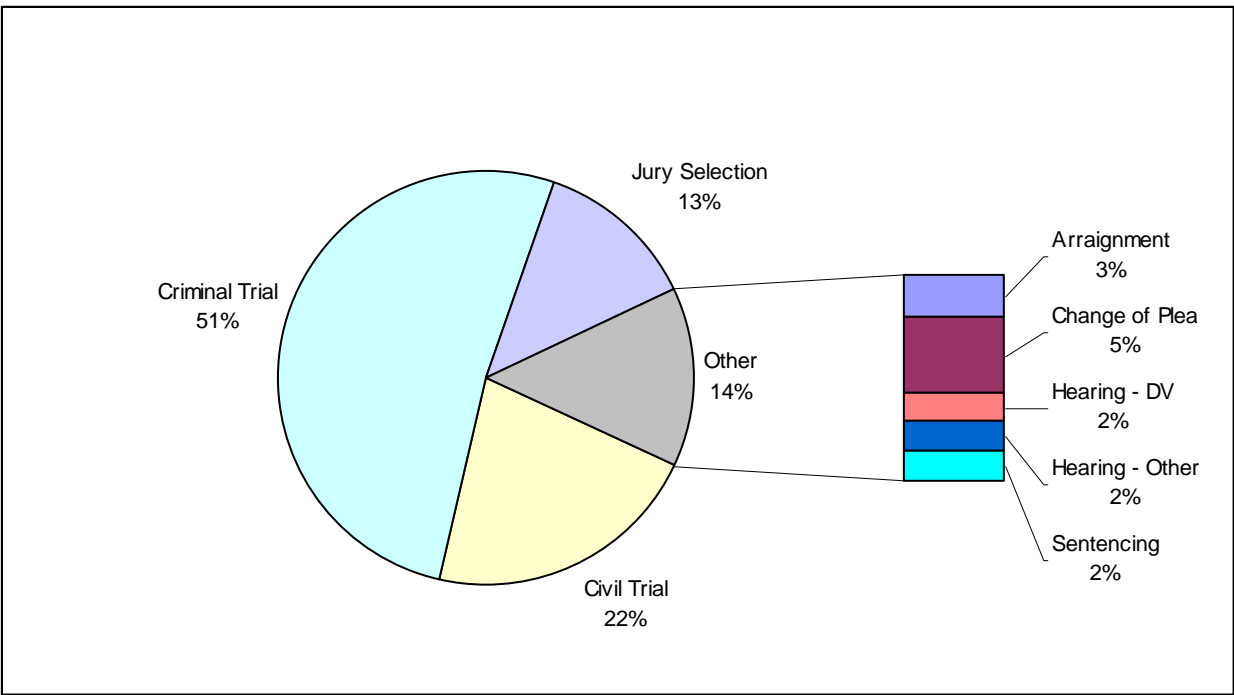
Is not exactly the "warm and friendly" type.

Keeps his emotions under wraps during this very sensitive testimony. Pointed rulings.

Watchful. Great job today.

# The Honorable Dan A. Hensley Anchorage Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.4
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.3
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.3
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.3
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.4
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.3
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.3</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	59 times
The defense:	1 time
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 107.6 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Hensley takes complete control of his courtroom from jury selection to closing arguments. CourtWatchers' responses have been overwhelmingly positive while observing him. His easy manner coupled with his firmness brings an air of dignity and justice to his courtroom.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 12 different CourtWatch personnel during 60 observations over 107.6 hours. Judge Hensley received 49 positive comments and 1 negative comment recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Polite and firm - keeps things moving along. Very patient with an elderly witness. His respect for the jury and their service shows by his presence in the courtroom when they enter and his standing for their entrance.

Very good attention to testimony of witnesses. Took lots of notes. Responsive to emotional break down of defendant during questioning.

Judge's attention to the jurors, the lawyers and his court is exceptional. He gives his full attention to the proceedings and is considerate of everyone.

Pays close attention and asks questions to clear up misunderstandings. Great job today.

A great job today dealing with both attorneys and their clients.

Ugly case, but he did a great job keeping the plaintiff's attorney in line.

Did not have the District Attorneys, who were watching the case from the gallery, be quiet during their colleague's closing. They were talking constantly.

The Judge took control by stating exactly how he wanted jury selection to go.

Firm with defense attorney. Let attorneys know he feels he is "being pushed around a little."

Hensley is an alert judge who runs a tight ship.

Stands for jurors when they enter courtroom. Explains each part of trial as it comes up.

He spoke directly to the defendant. Explained presumptive sentence - great job.

Quiet control - courteous.

Handles squabbling attorneys with dignity and respect.

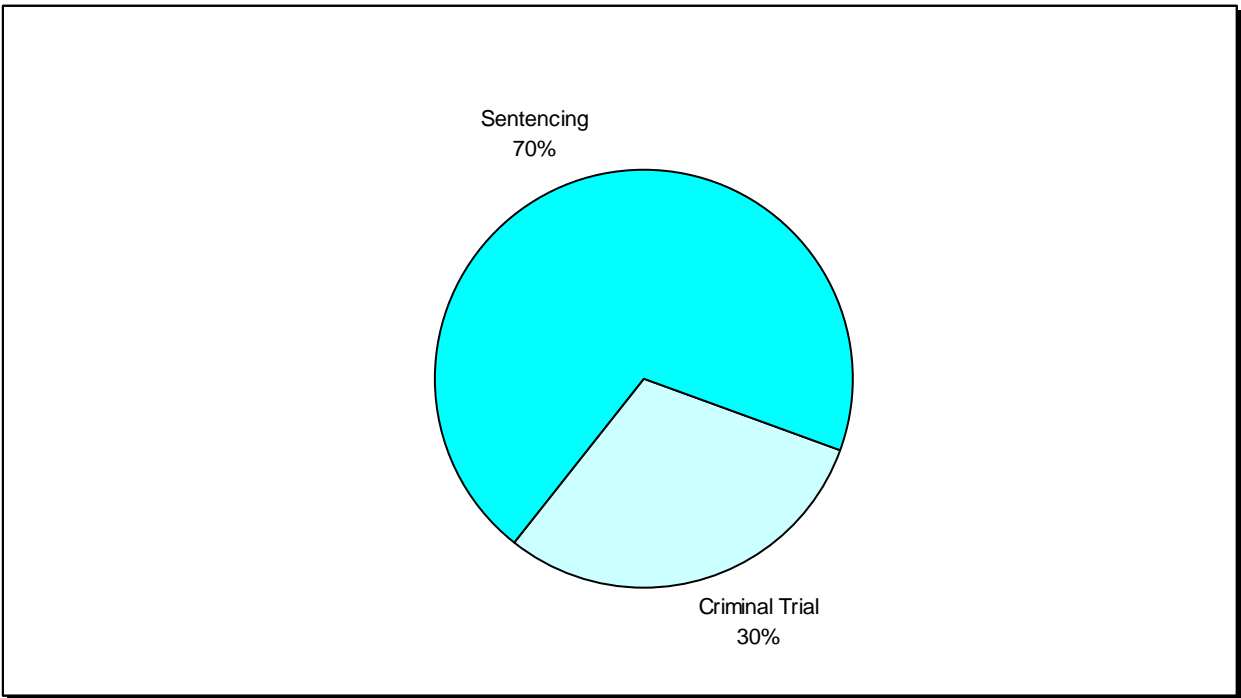
Very calm with defense attorney who tends to "beat a dead horse".

Takes the "terror" out of being in courtroom for witnesses. People respond to him well.

Alert to needs of jury. Spoke clearly.

# The Honorable Donald D. Hopwood Kodiak Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.1
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.9
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.8
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.1
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.0
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.0</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	10 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	7 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>7</b>

**Total observation time:** 15.4 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Hopwood was a visiting judge in both Anchorage and Kenai. The CourtWatch volunteers evaluated him in both locations. He is attentive to all and his courtroom is seen as calm, yet controlled. He is conscientious and his decisions are clearly understood.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 8 different CourtWatch personnel during 10 observations over 15.4 hours. Judge Hopwood received 9 positive comments and 1 negative comment recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge is always looking at the jury, victim's mother and the attorneys. Explained the process well. Asked the witness to make sure the gun was safe to be handled.

Had to stay on District Attorney about his editorial comments. In complete control of his courtroom - professional - spoke loud and clear.

This is one of the few judges that faulted the parents, especially the mother, for failing to provide the defendant with proper guidance, then covering up for him when he got caught. "None of the family can conform to anything."

Judge Hopwood gave the victim's mother as much time as needed to give her Victim Impact Statement. This was a brutal murder and Judge Hopwood handled this sentencing with grace and compassion.

Easy to understand - explained everything.

He gave victim's family opportunity to read impact statement. Spoke in language easily understandable by laymen.

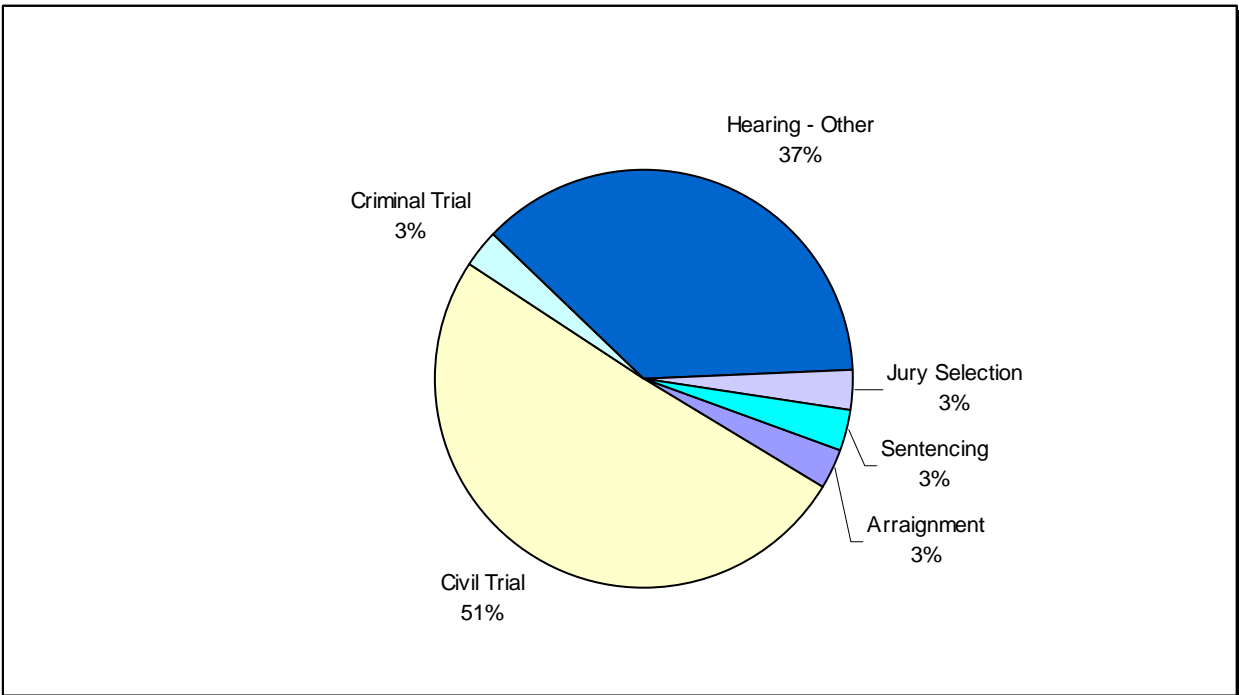
Could speak up a little louder.

His courtroom was calm and controlled.

Very compassionate to the mother and rest of family. Respectful to the defendant and was clearly making sure he understood the sentence.

# The Honorable Stephanie E. Joannides Anchorage Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.2
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.9
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.8
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.9
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.1
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.0</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	29 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	1 time

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 40.8 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Joannides' eye contact with all in her courtroom and her thorough explanations to witnesses are qualities that CourtWatch volunteers observed on many occasions. Her negative comments were almost all in reference to her "bored" appearance. She is seen as having a good rapport with people and is an excellent advocate for the Felony DWI Therapeutic Court and Felony Drug Court programs.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 13 different CourtWatch volunteers during 30 observations over 40.8 hours. Judge Joannides received 17 positive comments and 9 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Very attentive. Judge made sure defendant was aware of rights...

The judge was extremely patient with all parties - always keeping the best interest of the child in mind. Maintained tight control over attorneys, witnesses and defendant.

Should have told both plaintiff and defense attorneys to act professional. The attorneys were very unprofessional with each other.

Pays close attention-read along on paperwork. Always in great control - catches everything. Eye contact with all parties.

Judge Joannides was patient but firm in controlling a court proceeding, which included a translator who did not meet her standards.

Looks bored during Plaintiff's closing. Seems to show her attitude towards attorney by smirking.

Her rulings and research of applicable law were very thorough.

Judge Joannides didn't seem to be interested in the proceedings-looked very bored with it all.

Very pleasant. Several people commented that "she has good sense of humor." Good eye contact with people. Smiled a lot. Helped set the tone for the courtroom.

The Judge controlled a very explosive situation calmly and with great demeanor.

She is getting as good as Judge Hensley when it comes to eye contact with all in her court. She doesn't miss a thing. Very pleasant to everyone involved in case.

Head in hand-looks bored with LONG testimony.

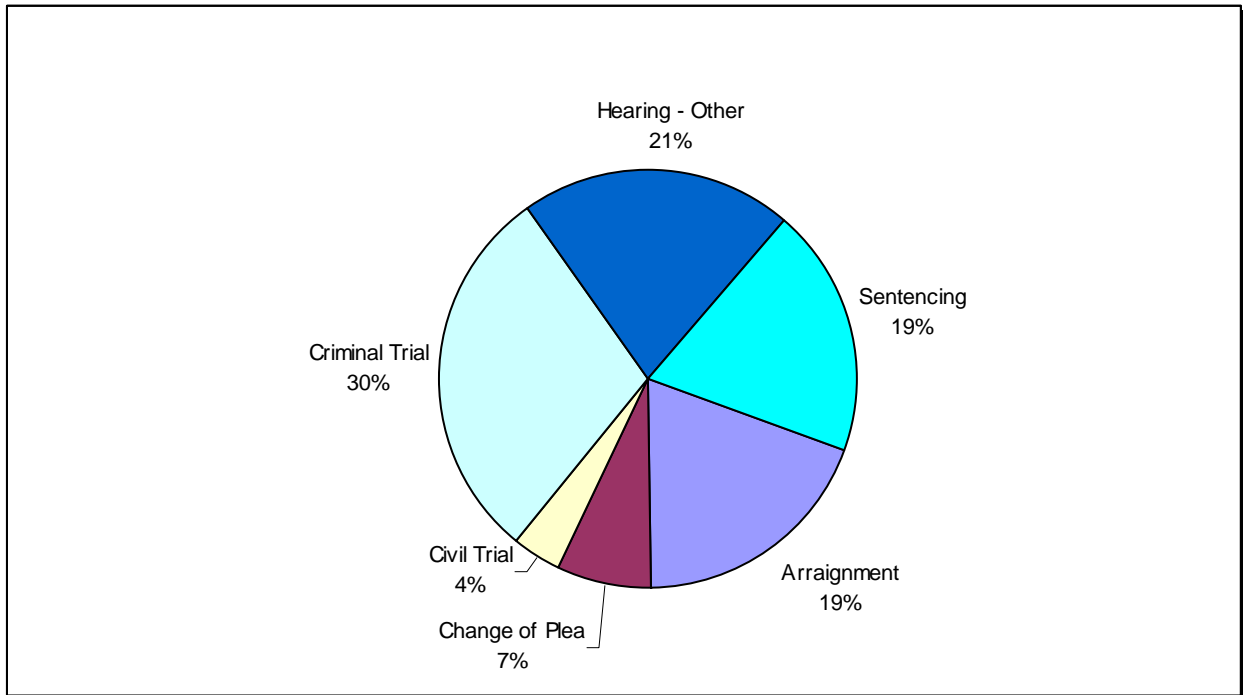
Attentive to jury comfort.

Excellent presentation of a most promising program.

Great rapport with people - seems to inspire incentive and achievement and yet requires defendants to follow the rules of "Drug" court.

# The Honorable Jonathan Link Kenai Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.1
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.1
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.2
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	72 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	1 time
Reasonable:	13 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>14</b>

**Total observation time:** 159.9 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Link explains his concerns to defendants regarding the choices they make and the long-term effect of those choices. He watches the jury carefully to make sure they are comfortable and he takes the extra time needed to explain the process to all participants.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 6 different CourtWatch personnel during 72 observations over 159.9 hours. Judge Link received 30 positive comments and 2 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Very considerate of jury-told them to stand and stretch.

He was very concerned with the defendant's repeat problems with alcohol and lack of concern for change. Tried to warn him that if he continues in the lifestyle, then he would rack up large chunks of prison time.

Judge asked questions and explained things very clearly.

Watches the jury for signs of needed breaks.

One of the best "you can stay clean and sober" speeches- Great job.

I could not hear the defense attorney and wonder why Judge Link did not have her "miked"?

Judge Link is watchful of juror weariness during monotonous testimony and made appropriate timely breaks. He is also watchful of spectators. He injects small amounts of humor to offset the tension in courtroom.

Judge Link was very frank with the defendant.

Reminded defense attorney to mark evidence prior-so jury doesn't have to wait.

Judge Link made an impassioned speech about the harm to the victim.

Somewhat "long winded".

Attentive, thoughtful decisions-doesn't let "petty combat" between attorneys continue.

Does not let this hearing (with all attorney witnesses) get over heated. Great job in a difficult position.

Stressed to defendant that her rehab is absolutely important and this was an extremely serious offense.

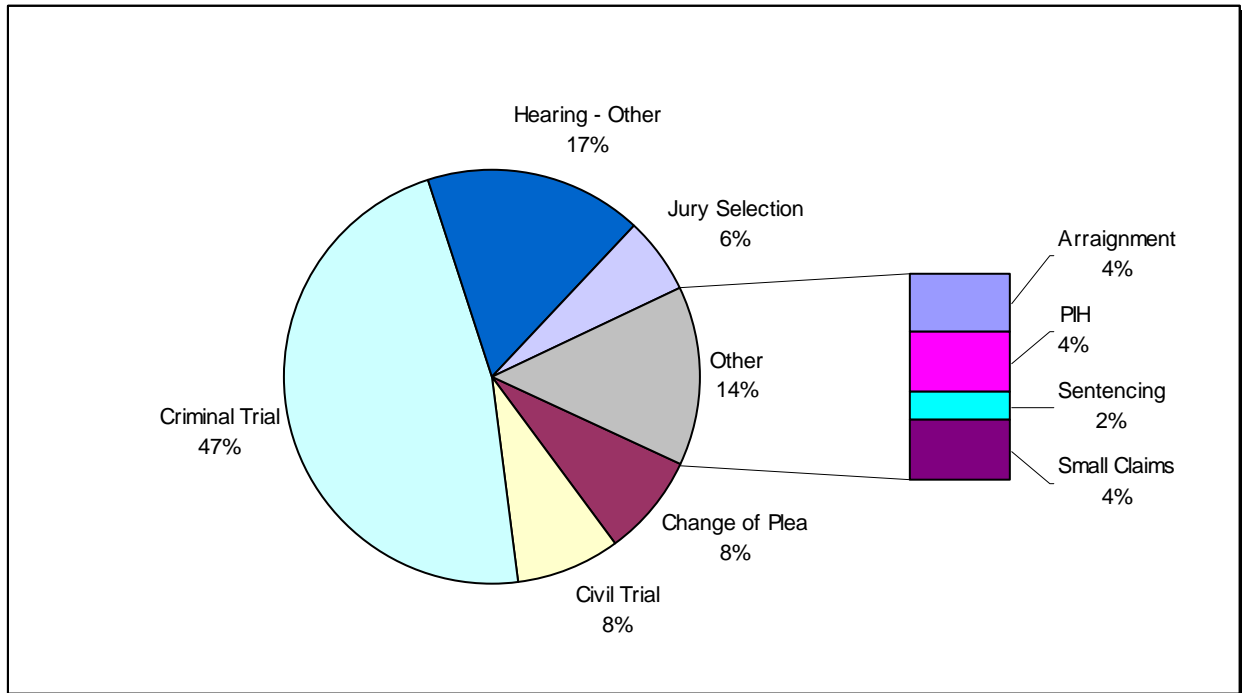
Judge Link was very frank with the defendant.

Very good with his explanations. One learns something new every time you are in his courtroom.

# The Honorable John R. Lohff

## Anchorage District Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.2
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.8
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.7
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.7
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	3.9
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Overall Score</b>	<b>3.9</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	48 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	3 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>3</b>

**Total observation time:** 70.2 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Lohff's ability to make the jury feel comfortable and his rapport with them is outstanding. His decisions are not always seen as clear and concise. His patience with defendants and plaintiffs is seen as excellent, as is his relationship with attorneys.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 15 different CourtWatch volunteers during 48 observations over 70.2 hours. Judge Lohff received 29 positive comments and 3 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

The judge was very easy to hear, and his comments were well constructed and easy to follow. The judge kept the jury well informed of what was happening.

Judge Lohff did an excellent job of explaining to a plaintiff why his evidence was inadequate.

Paid close attention to jury selection. Made jury feel relaxed. Asked some questions and made some comments personally to jurors to put them at ease. Always professional and in control of his courtroom.

I like this judge, but wish he could formulate his opinions, statements, etc.. in a clearer, more concise manner. It is sometimes hard to follow his thought patterns as to how he reached a decision.

Loud and clear - took extra time with explaining to jurors about the role of the alternate.

Judge Lohff takes extra time to explain to all defendants. Really goes the extra mile.

Had a difficult time making decisions today. He acted as though he was bored with the proceedings.

The judge really controls his courtroom. The first thing the judge did was apologize to the jury for the 30-minute delay to begin the day's court.

To the point - great explanations to the pro per defendant.

His mind seemed ahead of his mouth.

Speaks clearly. Great job-very patient with childish defense attorney. Must be a great poker player!

Decisions came quickly with a short explanation for his ruling following. On his toes today.

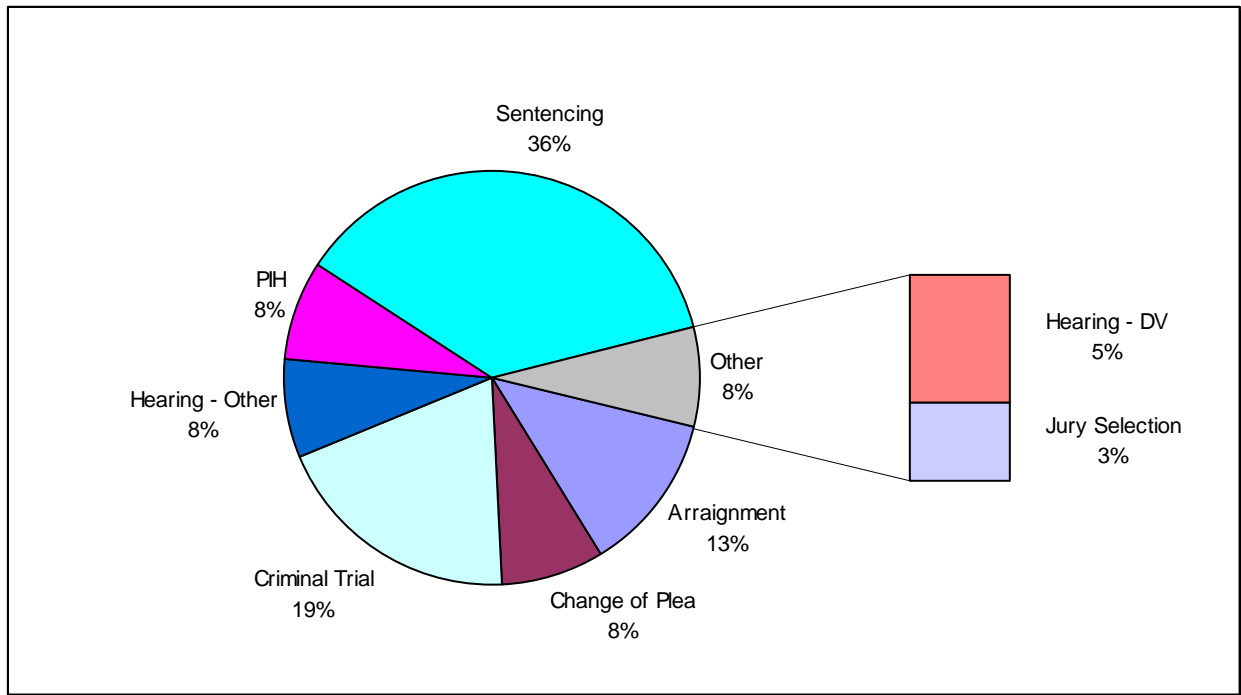
Demonstrated extreme patience when explaining the rights the defendant has...

Didn't rush proceedings. Appeared thoughtful with all of his decisions. Took time to talk to each defendant and explained his decisions to them.

Judge was very thorough in explaining the procedures to all parties involved - he encouraged participants to participate in mediation.

# The Honorable Suzanne Lombardi Palmer District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.4
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.9
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.2
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.9
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.1
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.2
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	40 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	1 time
Reasonable:	14 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>15</b>

**Total observation time:** 35.3 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Lombardi takes the extra time to fully explain the rights of defendants and how the judicial process works. She is seen as patient, sometimes to a fault, when dealing with ill-prepared attorneys. Clear, concise and courteous are common positive evaluations made by CourtWatch volunteers.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 8 different CourtWatch volunteers during 40 observations over 35.3 hours. Judge Lombardi received 18 positive comments and 4 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge was attentive. It was apparent she had done her homework.

Attentive and focused. Spoke clearly and loudly...She patiently explained to the defendant that it must be his personal decision to either testify or not...

She allowed the Public Defender to ramble, interrupt others and speak out of turn. The judge left the bench to help clear up the status of several defense exhibits once the jury had left the room.

Clear, concise, very courteous.

She speaks up and explains the process well.

Great explanation of Chaney Criteria.

Judge Lombardi conducted the hearings in a dignified and professional manner. She took extra time and effort to explain the law and process to several defendants.

Judge Lombardi took time to explain to youthful defendant the ramifications of his actions. She noted his strong family support and his chance to save himself.

Judge ended up doing all the submitting of evidence and marking of evidence for the defense. She lost control of the courtroom with regard to the defense.

Spoke clear and loud. Spent a considerable amount of time ensuring that the defendant understood his alternatives and rights.

Judge did not have the attorneys "miked" and that made it difficult to hear what was going on. She uses "ahhh" alot.

Judge Lombardi took great care to ensure defendants understood the rights they were giving up when pleading no contest. She listened intently to the recommendations of the prosecutor and defense attorneys. She offered each defendant an opportunity to speak prior to sentencing.

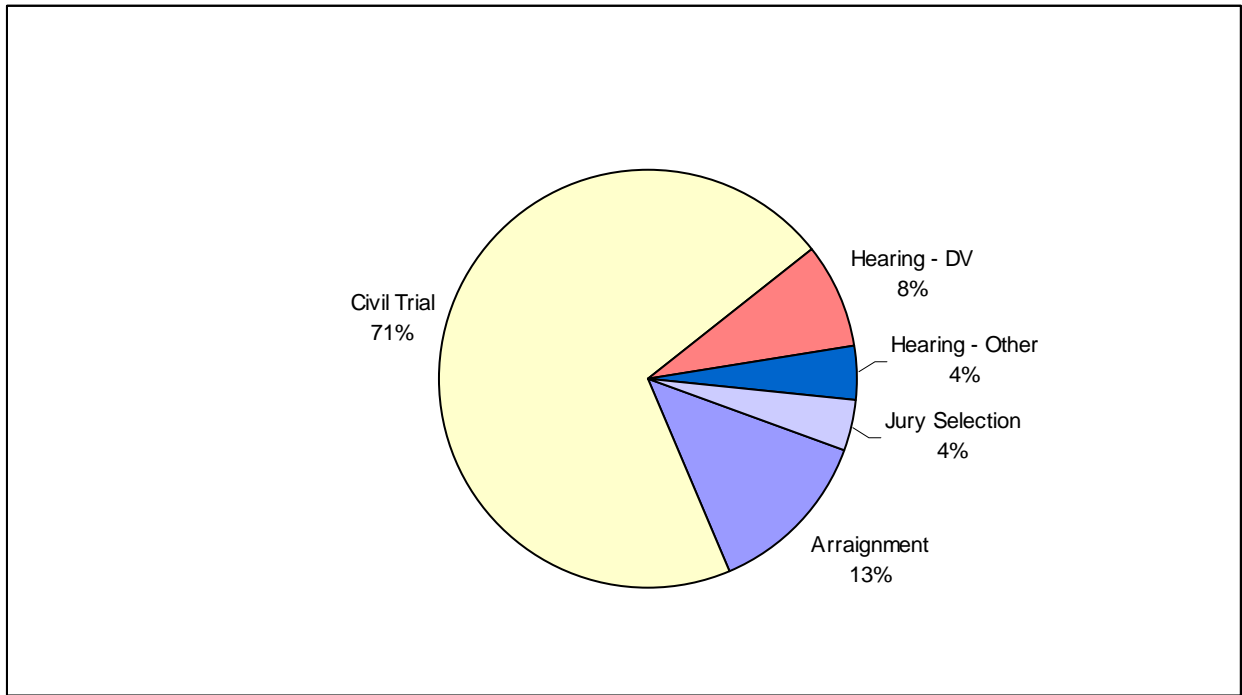
It was very difficult to hear anyone in the courtroom.

The judge paid close attention to all participants and listened intently to opening statements.

# The Honorable Peter A. Michalski

## Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	3.9
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.9
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.6
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.8
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	3.8
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>3.8</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	24 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 54.3 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Michalski keeps things moving forward with a positive outlook towards all in his courtroom. It is sometimes difficult to hear him and other participants. He is observed as patient and thorough and is complimented on his handling of domestic violence cases.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 10 different CourtWatch personnel during 24 observations over 54.3 hours. Judge Michalski received 11 positive comments and 5 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Went the extra mile to get the parties to settle. It worked!

Judge Michalski is patient, understanding and his advice is clear with directions on future actions.

His handling of Domestic Violence cases is excellent.

Some statements are difficult to hear. His hand is over his mouth.

Michalski keeps the case going - always watching all participants.

A great job by the judge - kept attorneys to the point-watched for jurors who are having a tough time with medical terms.

He needs to "mike" the room. Even a potential juror asked him to speak up.

Very touching, sensible advice given to parties on being amicable through divorce and speaking highly of each other to child.

Very patient with pro pers.

The judge was an active participant-asking many questions, giving detailed explanations to third party custodians regarding their duties. The judge greets each defendant by name.

Has control of courtroom.

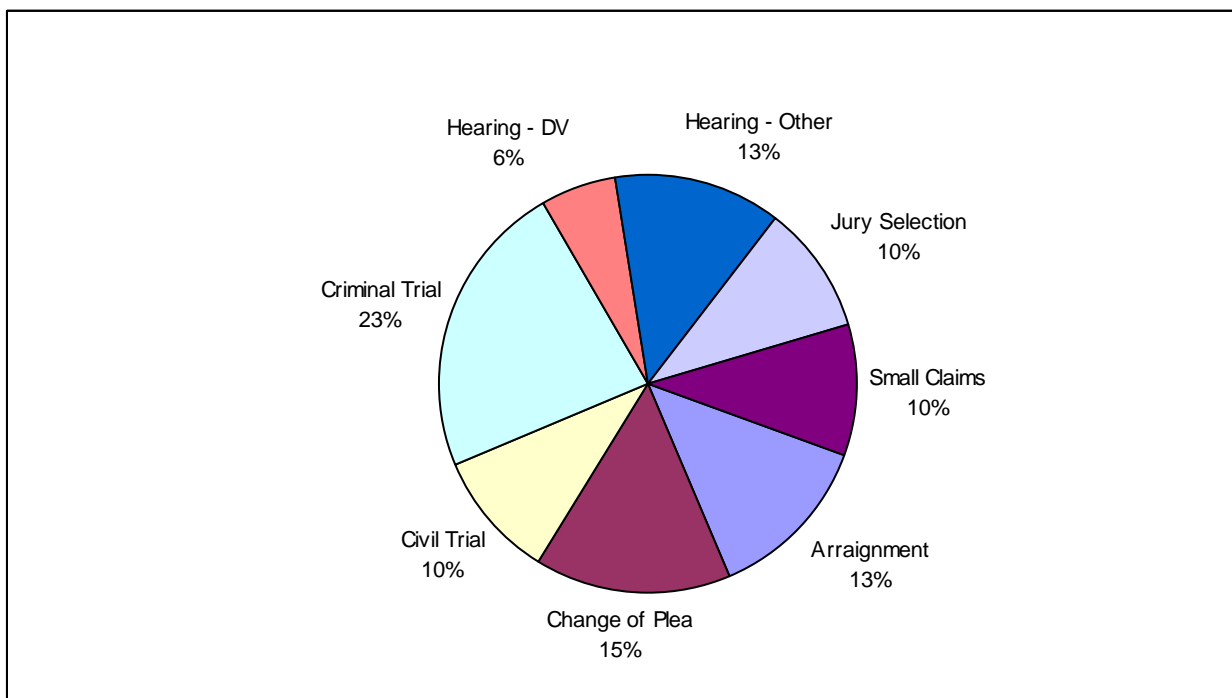
Judge sits back away from the bench and speaks softly and it is difficult to hear in rear of courtroom due to distance from microphone.

Showed concern for the victim. He did not let defendant out on 3rd party until further research.

Judge explained to one defendant the importance of having a defense attorney. Seemed to have good control of courtroom.

# The Honorable Gregory J. Motyka Anchorage District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.2
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.2
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.3
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.4
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.2
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.2</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	52 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 60.5 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Motyka's patience with pro per defendants is exemplary. He is focused and spends any extra time needed to make sure they have a complete understanding of the proceedings. Once again, the negative comments center on CourtWatchers inability to hear what is happening in his courtroom.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 16 different CourtWatch volunteers during 52 observations over 60.5 hours. Judge Motyka received 38 positive comments and 3 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Defense acted pro per. Judge took a lot of time explaining procedures.

Judge Motyka demonstrated a very high degree of objectivity when questioning both defendants and plaintiffs. His questions examined the issue very thoroughly.

Great job with the pro per.

Was clearly irritated that the attorneys were ill prepared.

Judge's rulings on exhibits were understandable to a lay person - even though the material was very technical.

Explained to plaintiff whom to contact for assistance in pursuing a judgment. Judge very attentive and aware of what was happening.

The courtroom speaker system was inadequate to monitor the proceedings any longer today - very noisy in courtroom.

Judge is patient with pro per. Speaks up and watches both attorney and pro per for professional behavior. Firm yet fair.

With the defendant representing himself, the judge took time before jury selection to make sure pro per knew what to do for jury selection. Anticipates questions before asked - he clearly explains all points.

Judge looks very bored during long closing by defense attorney.

Judge was clear and decisive-his admonitions were strong to those whose next offense would result in serious jail time - excellent explanations.

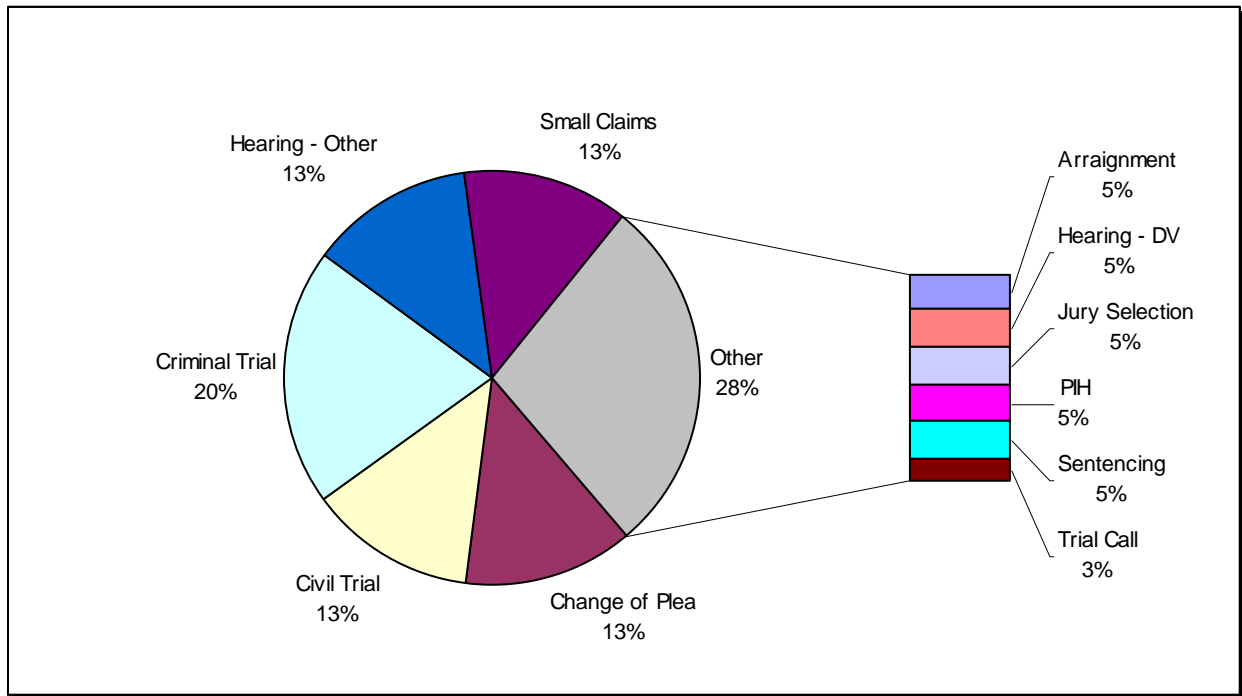
This is not the first time I have seen hats being worn in his courtroom – by both defendants and jurors. He said nothing.

Very clear explanations. Takes the "edge" off the intimidation factor for first time people going through arraignments.

Keeps things moving forward without showing emotion. Great job.

# The Honorable Sigurd E. Murphy Anchorage District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.9
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.4
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.2
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.2</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	37 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	1 time

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	4 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>4</b>

**Total observation time:** 47.9 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Murphy's clear explanations, especially to pro per participants, is exceptional. Many of the CourtWatchers noted his ready smile and pleasant demeanor. His only negative comments were based on the observers inability to hear him and their impression that attorneys were not reprimanded for various reasons.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 14 different CourtWatch volunteers during 38 observations over 47.9 hours. Judge Murphy received 29 positive comments and 5 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge Murphy was very explicit in explaining the law and how it related to everyone that came before him.

Judge Murphy thoughtfully explained the law and the "pre-trial diversion" so defendants could decide whether it was a good decision. He was very patient and tried carefully to answer all questions.

Was very involved in the proceeding. Clear instructions to all. He was firm but respectful.

Sometimes difficult to hear what the judge was saying.

Judge keeps track of the comfort of the jury. His decisions are quick and he explains well.

Let the mother of a child know she would need to leave if the child starts to cry.

He is very strong on victim's right to be heard.

His humor is refreshing. Keeps things rolling along. Very patient with all in his courtroom.

Needs to speak up a bit.

Pleasant-was able to make clear determinations although there was confusion on the District Attorney's part with all cases.

Always lets pro pers speak their piece. They must feel they have had a fair hearing in his small claims cases.

No reprimand to DA's office for non-notification of victims and for disorganization on their part.

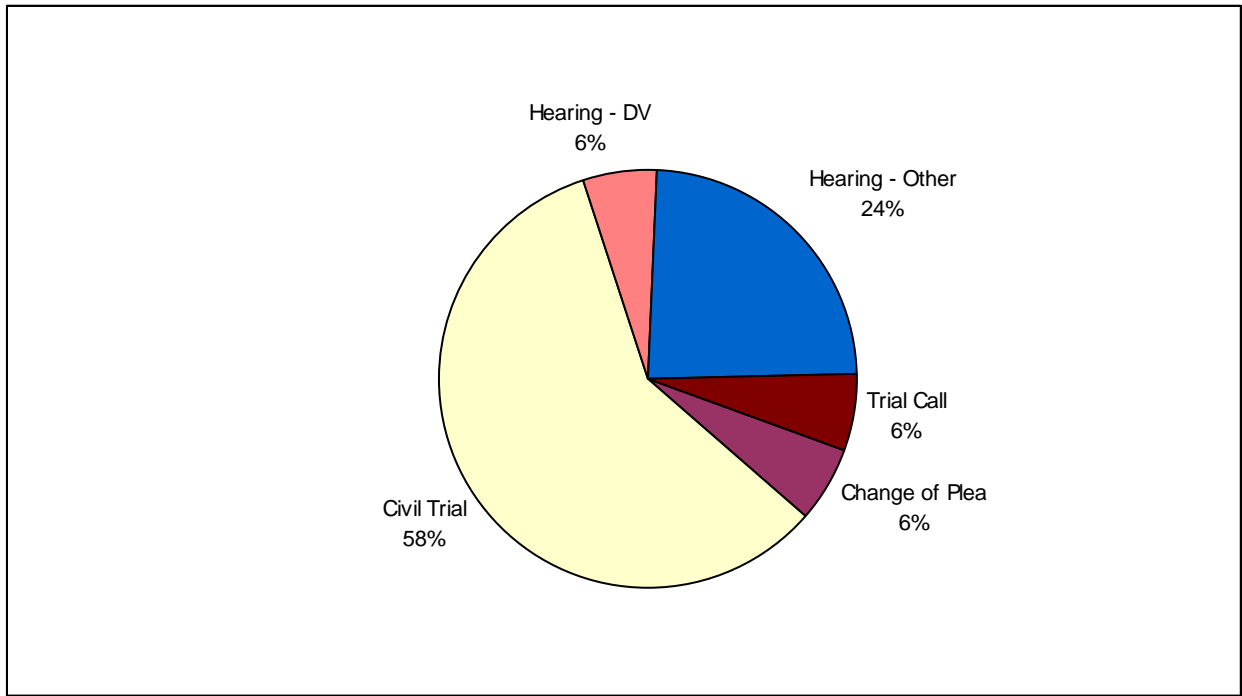
With judges seeing so many of these cases, Judge Murphy's patience is impressive. Great job.

The judge did an exceptional job of shepherding a non-lawyer through his questioning of a witness. He was patient, clear and excellent in his explanations.

Judge Murphy was very patient in explaining his directed verdict. He showed compassion to the plaintiff and explained his ruling and the law carefully.

# The Honorable John Reese Anchorage Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.0
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.9
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.0
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.1
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.1
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.0</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	17 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	none
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>none</b>

**Total observation time:** 28.1 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Reese is detail oriented and runs his courtroom with a “no nonsense” approach. His decisions are well explained and easy to understand although, on a couple of observations, CourtWatchers noted he seemed to be preoccupied. He is also seen as a very active participant during proceedings in his courtroom.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 7 different CourtWatch volunteers during 17 observations over 28.1 hours. Judge Reese received 8 positive comments and 2 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

His questions were direct and to the point. This judge is the best at getting to the point and keeping things going forward.

The judge is very attentive to the witnesses and to the jury.

The judge was very attentive and thorough-appeared willing to adjust schedules for the benefit of the participants.

Writing during proceedings (notes on case? drawing?) Not clear enunciation-mumbling.

Speaks loudly-well amplified.

Very attentive. Quick decisive rulings. Made sure witnesses could be heard by all in the courtroom.

Tuned in and out. Looked like he was resting his eyes (sleeping)? Told defendant “not to worry about it” when she would ask questions-gave her no clarifications. English was not her first language.

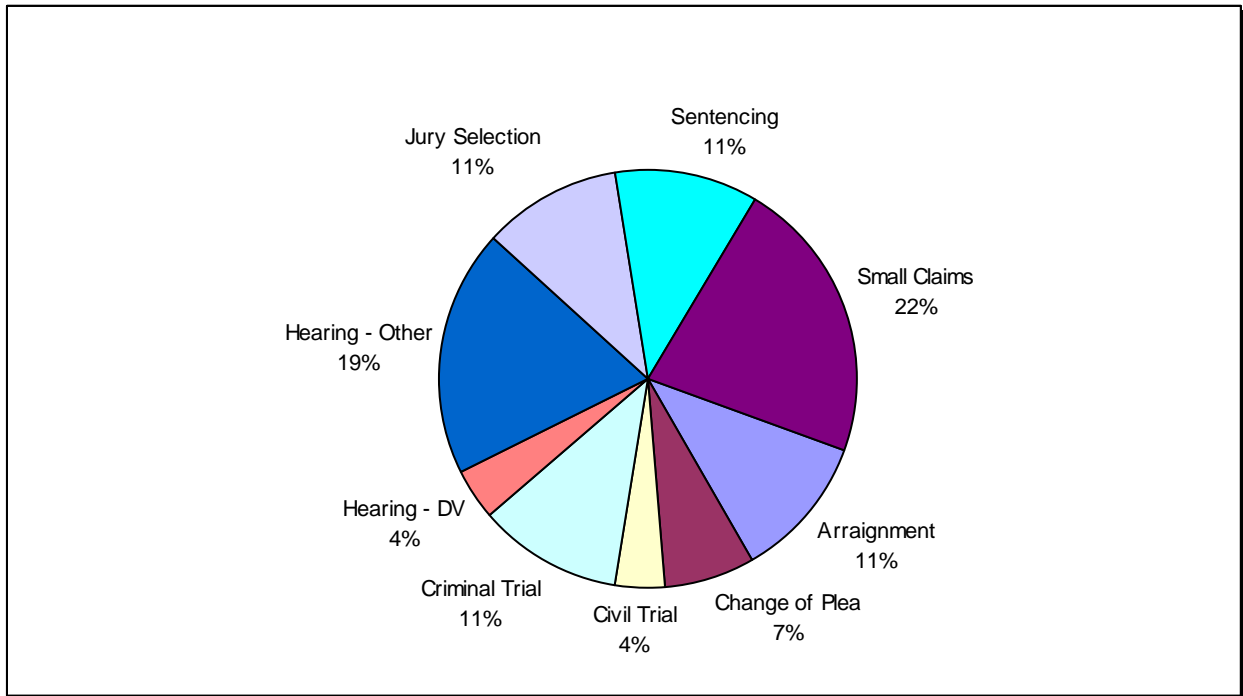
Excellent control of defendant with very clear no-nonsense explanations of what would happen if defendant didn't comply with Judge's orders.

The judge was attentive to witness and to both attorneys on final argument.

The judge said very little during the trial-on hearing personal bad news, came back to the courtroom and conducted business in a very professional manner.

# The Honorable Stephanie Rhoades Anchorage District Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.0
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.9
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.1
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.8
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.8
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.0
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.7
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>3.9</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	27 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	1 time
Reasonable:	4 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>5</b>

**Total observation time:** 28.3 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Rhoades is observed as being skillful, calm and patient when handling those who are verbally abusive or disrespectful in her courtroom. CourtWatchers note that she sometimes displays a condescending attitude towards attorneys appearing before her. It is noted she demonstrates an ability to move proceedings along smoothly and efficiently.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 10 different CourtWatch volunteers during 27 observations over 28.3 hours. Judge Rhoades received 16 positive comments and 6 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge Rhoades handled a very verbally abusive person with great skill and judgment. She controlled a difficult situation with understanding and firmness.

Judge's explanations of jury instructions are clear and concise. She also shows warmth and a sense of humor, which are appropriate to the courtroom. She does not waste time and her courtroom runs very smoothly.

Judge spoke rapidly, almost by rote. With four defendants, they did not understand her statements. Her explanations were a bit abrupt.

She is clear, concise and in control. Kept the gallery quiet.

Judge Rhoades showed great understanding and support of those defendants who had tried and had improved their lives by getting back on track through rehabilitation programs, etc..

Judge Rhoades showed her nasty side again. That "snotty" attitude towards attorneys came out.

She moved 30+ cases through with speed and efficiency. She was always in control of the courtroom. She gave thorough explanations to all defendants.

Judge Rhoades' decisions ran from remand to a completion of SIS requirements. She shows great compassion along with "don't foul up" message that is direct and clear.

I wonder if pro pers ever feel as though they have had their "day in court" when they leave?

Judge was patient with a defendant who had a problem accepting responsibility for a domestic violence assault. She kept control over the proceedings even while the defendant tried to interrupt her.

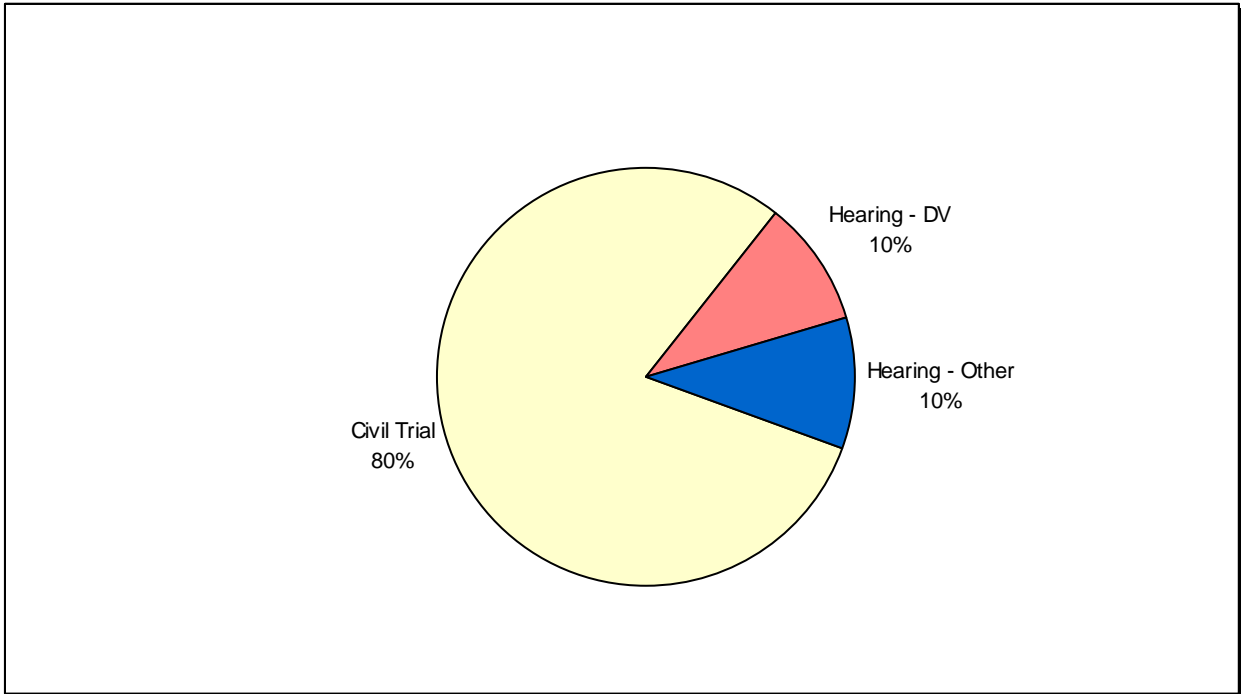
Judge makes her jury panel feel welcome and as though she cares about their individual welfare.

Did a great job talking to prospective jurors. Spoke quickly but clearly. Kept it light and put them at ease. Paid close attention.

Judge Rhoades does an outstanding job with this program - she is a mixture of understanding, firmness, humor and compassion.

# The Honorable Eric T. Sanders Anchorage Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.5
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.3
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.4
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.4
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.2
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.6
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.5
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.4</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	21 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	none
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>none</b>

**Total observation time:** 33.2 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Sanders keeps a tight rein on participants in his courtroom, allowing him to move proceedings along while still giving everyone their "day in court." He is keenly aware of what jurors give up to serve jury duty and does not like to waste jurors time by running late or having ill prepared attorneys appear before him.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 9 different CourtWatch volunteers during 21 observations over 33.2 hours. Judge Sanders received 18 positive comments and 2 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge kept the "long winded" expert witness moving along. He also gave a great presentation to a 6th grade class who were visiting for Law Day.

Judge helped pro-per with appropriate procedures. The judge took time to make sure everyone knew what was happening as well as discussing a schedule for future events.

Really tried to get these folks to settle - Easy to understand what the judge is explaining.

A better job could not have been done. Judge Sanders explained hearsay, objections and what the jury could expect as time goes on.

Judge's questions were searching and definitive.

Seemed to be slow making rulings today. Tends to cover his mouth with his hand, making it difficult to understand him.

Great job! Paid close attention. Had to keep control over aggressive defense attorney-did it calmly and with a smile-took extra time to explain things to plaintiff and defendant. More than fair.

Paid close attention. Suggested to attorney (plaintiff's) to not "re-hash" things.

Explains procedures so well. Finally a judge coming down on the abuse of the domestic violence restraining orders. Tries to make sure each person understands what the restraining order is by asking each petitioner "what do you want me to do today?" He really makes the petitioner think.

Admonished attorneys for wasting the jurors time because he had to excuse jurors several times.

Gave great explanation of his decisions. Firm and stern.

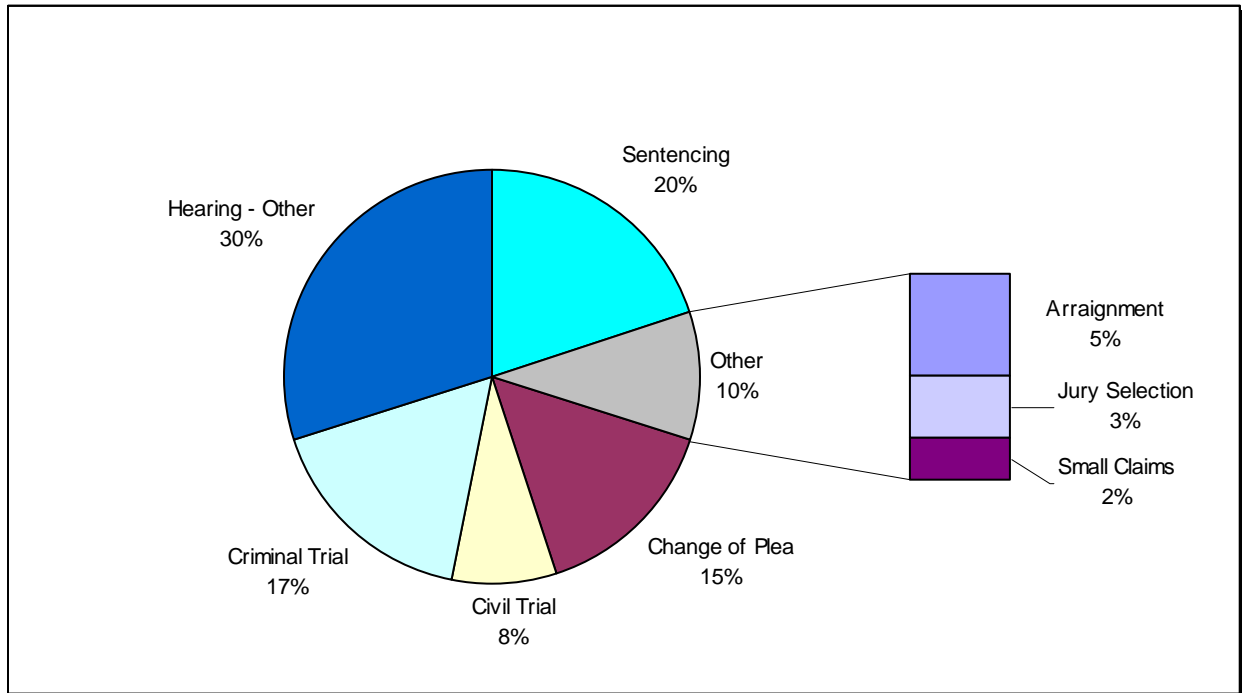
Judge listens to each case. Is respectful to petitioners. Explains what a domestic violence hearing is and what the limits are.

A little too patient with ill prepared plaintiff's attorney.

This judge is great with the jury.

# The Honorable Eric Smith Palmer Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.4
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.2
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.2
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.3
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.3
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.2</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	59 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	1 time
Reasonable:	13 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>14</b>

**Total observation time:** 62.8 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Smith is observed as being a skillful mediator who attempts to reach a settlement between parties before going to trial. Two of the three negative comments dealt with his failure to inquire if the victim had been notified of the proceeding. He is attentive and fair to all participants in his courtroom.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 6 different CourtWatch volunteers during 59 observations over 62.8 hours. Judge Smith received 37 positive comments and 6 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

With the concurrence of opposing parties, Judge Smith allowed CourtWatch volunteers to observe a settlement conference. He explained that he preferred to meet with each party separately and discuss the issues raised and their individual positions and settlement offer. Then he tries to bring the parties together to identify any common ground and try to build on that. Judge Smith was fair, impartial, frank, and honest with both parties. His efforts appeared to help bring the parties closer to a settlement.

The judge was in control of his courtroom. He had to rule on numerous objections, and keep peace between the attorneys. He noted that he understood their frustration.

Can't hear the judge very well.

Explained each of his rulings. Kept tight control of the trial, as both sides appeared frustrated.

Judge Smith did not ask the prosecutor if the victims had been notified of the sentencing hearing and their right to attend. I have noted that visiting Anchorage judges always ask the prosecutor to verify victim notification in cases where a victim is involved.

Judge Smith seemed to be having a rare bad day. He was short and sharp with several participants, although one defendant certainly deserved his warning to quiet down and watch his language.

Judge Smith did a good job in balancing the sentence to punish the defendant yet offer him some hope to turn his life around.

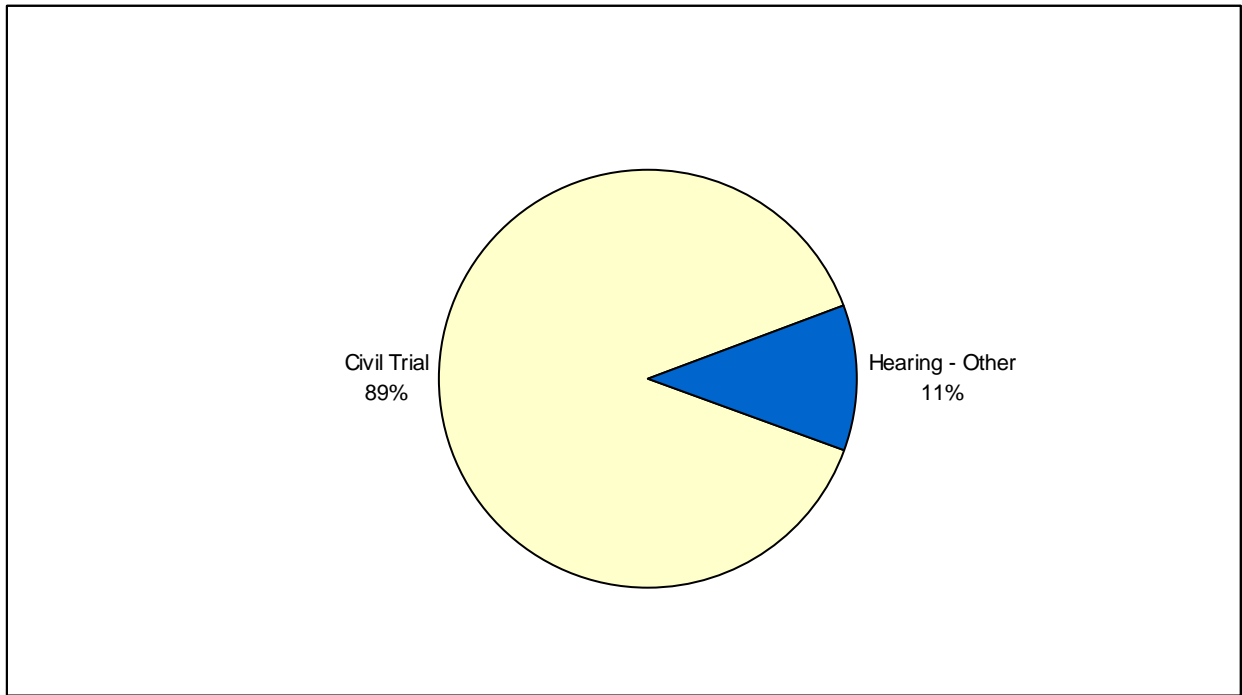
Judge Smith did not inquire if the victims had been notified of the sentencing nor did he ask if the victims approved of the plea agreement. I have found Judge Smith to be fair and reasonable in almost all of my previous evaluations, but I was very disappointed with his acceptance and approval of this plea agreement. I feel the sentence was far too lenient and not justified by the facts or the defendant's behavior and demeanor.

Judge Smith noted the Rule 11 agreement was unusual. He requested an explanation of why it was appropriate.

Judge Smith was very involved in the hearing. He discussed case law precedents with both attorneys and asked questions to clarify the testimony of a Trooper. He interacted with both attorneys seeking to clarify and understand their positions and points. He was fair, helpful and impartial.

## The Honorable Sen K. Tan Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



#### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.0
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	3.7
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.1
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.9
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.0</b>

#### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	19 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

#### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	1 time
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total observation time:** 37.8 hours



## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Tan consistently shows compassion to witnesses, victims and defendants alike. CourtWatchers comment on his fairness and control in his courtroom. He explains his decisions thoroughly and is active in the questioning of witnesses, when clarification of testimony is needed.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 11 different CourtWatch volunteers during 19 observations over 37.8 hours. Judge Tan received 15 positive comments and 1 negative comment recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Paid close attention to all proceedings. Judge's remarks made sense and were understandable.

Explained decisions in detail.

The judge showed compassion when he told witness "take your time."

Judge Tan was constantly aware of all activity in the courtroom. Judge did an excellent job of facilitating telephonic testimony, providing good instructions to the witness and the jury. The judge also overcame a technical problem and kept testimony moving.

His voice trails off at the end of each sentence.

Judge Tan keeps a watchful eye on the courtroom - very alert to the jury's comfort.

Judge Tan handled an extremely volatile case with fairness and with clear decisive rulings.

Speaks so one can hear. Explains procedure for the next day to the jury. Considerate to all present.

Shows compassion to witness during emotional testimony.

Very attentive to detail.

Judge Tan showed great compassion and understanding to the defendant who was having difficulty remembering information.

Took an active role in questioning witnesses. You could tell he had a very thorough grasp of the case before him. Easily heard due to the microphone he uses. No longer puts hands up in front of his face which used to muffle his comments.

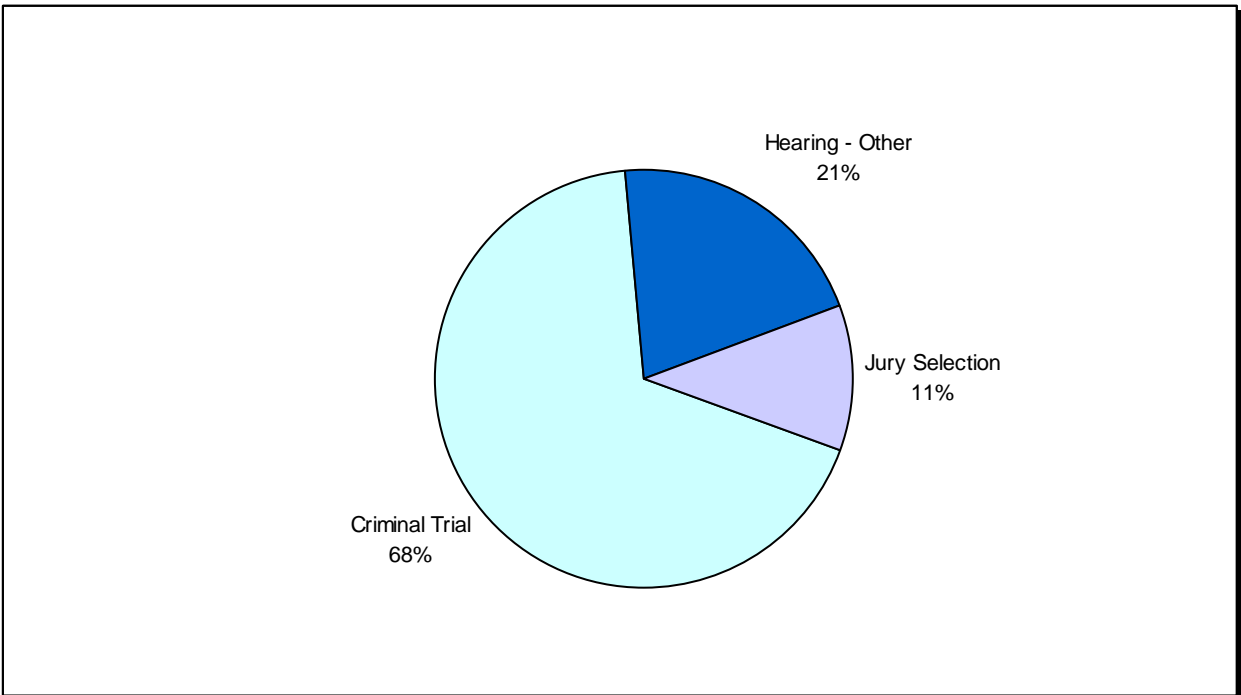
Very active by questioning witnesses for clarification.

Judge was in complete control of his court, he brought attorneys together for conference with regularity.

Judge was clear in his statements.

# The Honorable Fred Torrisi Dillingham Superior Court

## Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.7
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.5
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.4
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.5
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	4.3
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.1
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.4
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.5
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.4</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	19 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	none
Severe:	none

**Total sentencings:** none

**Total observation time:** 42.8 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Torrasi was a visiting judge in Anchorage. He is thorough and clear with his explanations. CourtWatchers who evaluated him unanimously agreed he was well prepared and seemed comfortable with his responsibilities as a judge. The extra time he took to ensure fairness was also noted.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 7 different CourtWatch volunteers during 19 observations over 42.8 hours. Judge Torrasi received 15 positive comments and no negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Judge Torrasi noted he had only recently been assigned the case and was not as familiar with the case as he would like. However, his questions and comments during the hearings clearly indicated he had worked hard to prepare for the hearings. Good job.

Judge was hard to hear at first, however spoke up later on. Paid close attention to testimony.

Great job with potential jurors. Clear and concise explanations. Initial impression is Judge Torrasi is very sharp and will do a good job ensuring a fair trial to both sides.

Alert/decisive rulings-Watches witness and attorneys during questioning. Good job-Nice to see this judge work.

Humor shows-keeps things moving.

Judge Torrasi explained the jury process very well. Was very much in control.

Mindful of jurors comfort. Takes notes-watches the exhibits carefully.

Judge Torrasi paid close attention to proceedings. Took a lot of time going over what it could mean for defendant to represent himself. Many times advised against it. Good explanation and tried to educate defendant. Great control of courtroom. Had to control defendant and keep him on track. Great job!

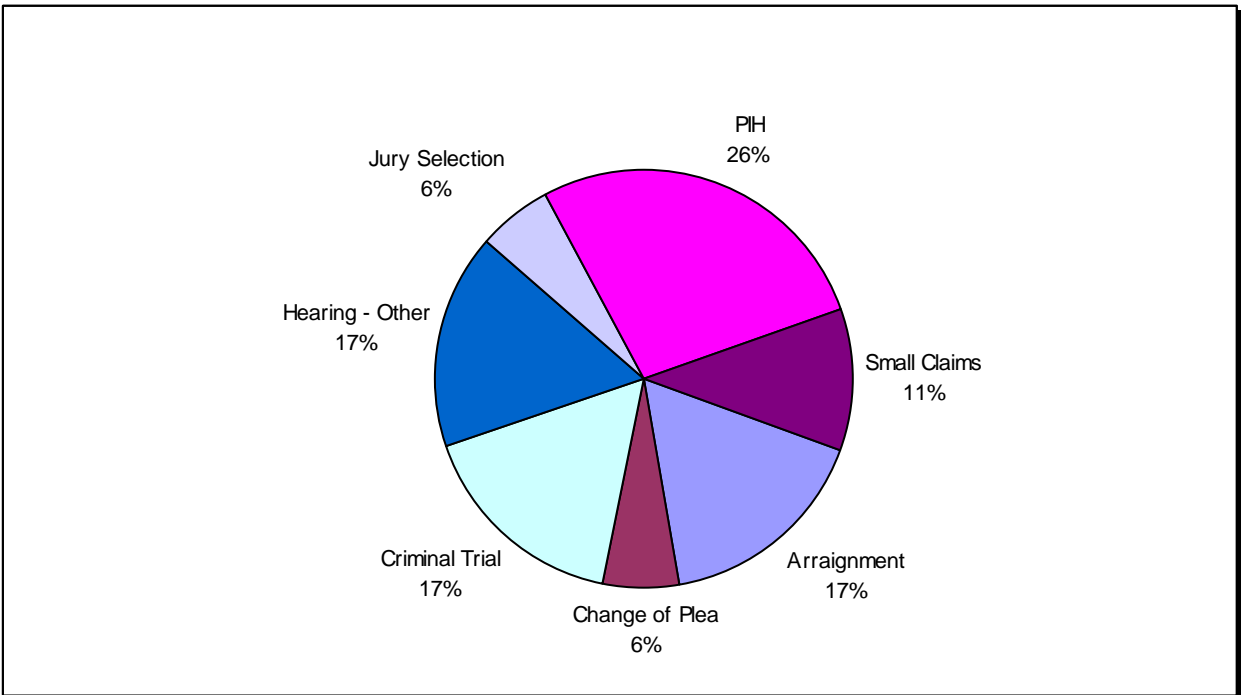
Stands when the jurors come into the courtroom.

Asks questions to clear up any misunderstanding.

# The Honorable James N. Wanamaker

## Anchorage District Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.2
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	3.8
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	3.8
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	3.8
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	3.9
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.8
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>3.9</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	18 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	none
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>none</b>

**Total observation time:** 14.9 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Wanamaker gets high marks for his attentiveness and caring attitude towards participants in his Wellness Court. CourtWatchers do note some sense of confusion during these types of proceedings. His encouraging remarks to defendants to keep improving their lives are kind and firm.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 8 different CourtWatch volunteers during 18 observations over 14.9 hours. Judge Wanamaker received 9 positive comments and 3 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Talked to defendant on one to one level and stressed the importance of the AA program. Praised the man for his success with Naltrexone.

Asked if everyone could hear him. Said to a defendant "Responsibility is the name of the game."

Couldn't hear a thing in the courtroom. Microphones not on. Jury leaning forward to hear witness.

Maintained control of courtroom. His explanation of the procedure was clear and easily understood. He thanked one defendant's parents for being present. He treated all with respect and impartiality.

Good explanation on his verdict. Good job - professional.

Gave what the charge was and whether it was a state or city case with each defendant. Made sure everyone could hear. Was in the courtroom for the arraignment tape!!

Judge occasionally allowed both parties to speak simultaneously.

He encourages defendants without putting them down. Participants in his program seem to respond to him when he talks about their success and futures.

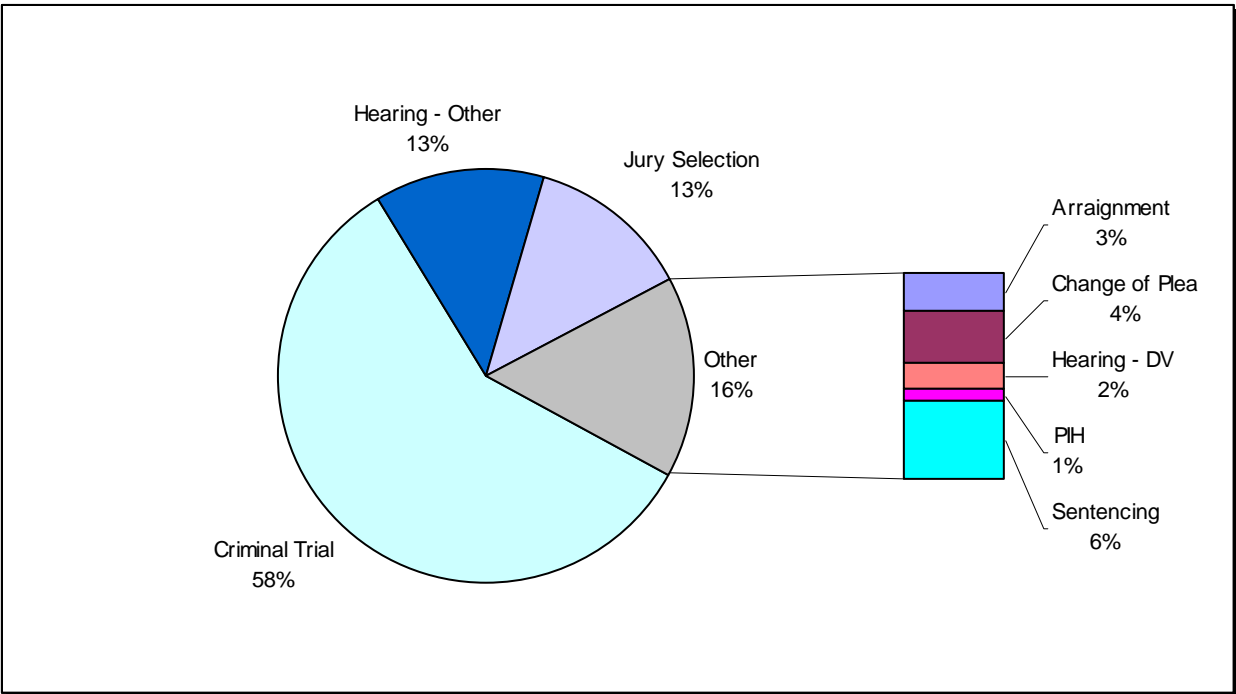
Domestic violence assault victim is in denial but judge handled situation well, offering her an opportunity to vent.

Read up on case before him. Thorough understanding of the defendant's history, etc. Had an almost "grandfatherly" approach in speaking to the defendant. He seems to enjoy presiding over these wellness hearings.

# The Honorable Michael L. Wolverton

## Anchorage Superior Court

### Type of Proceeding by Percentage



### Evaluation Results

Did the judge appear to pay attention to proceedings and participants?	4.3
Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?	4.1
Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?	4.0
Were the judge's remarks understandable and did they make sense?	4.1
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the victim (whether present or not)?	3.9
Did the judge show understanding and compassion to the defendant?	4.0
Did the judge take the time to explain to the participants?	4.2
Did the judge treat all participants fairly and impartially?	4.0
<b>2002 Evaluation Average</b>	<b>4.1</b>

### Did the judge favor either side?

No:	110 times
The defense:	none
The prosecution:	none

### During sentencings, was the judge . . .

Lenient:	none
Reasonable:	9 times
Severe:	none
<b>Total sentencings:</b>	<b>9</b>

**Total observation time:** 182.7 hours

## **Evaluation Comments**

Judge Wolverton is not afraid to show his emotions, but controls them in a dignified manner. He is distinguished in every sense of the word. CourtWatchers have noted, on more than one occasion, that there are distractions in the courtroom that are not dealt with by him. He gives clear, concise and in-depth explanations.

The following comments are representative of those recorded by 21 different CourtWatch volunteers during 110 observations over 182.7 hours. Judge Wolverton received 68 positive comments and 10 negative comments recorded by CourtWatch observers.

## **Comments**

Speaks clearly and loudly. Aware when he began "losing" the jury during the reading of the instructions. Makes the extra effort to clearly explain procedures. An almost perfect job today.

Paid close attention to the questioning of witnesses, and asked one witness to clarify ambiguous testimony.

His examples and explanations are clear and "layman friendly." His jury selection process should be used as a model.

A wonderful job listening to the victim's family. Clear and precise with his rulings.

Noisy gallery. Defendant's supporters were rude and disrespectful to the court. He did not reprimand them.

Judge kept his temper in check - very tough decision to continue this sentencing.

Great job of "airing" things out with the District Attorney. Very calm, cool and collected.

Judge expressed his concern for the pain caused to the victim's family due to a delay in sentencing, but he also protected the defendant's right to have his motion acted on.

Judge Wolverton did a good job of moving the proceedings along in spite of the delays caused by the childish behavior of both attorneys.

The courtroom was full and busy. There were babies crying, kids laughing and talking and people mulling all about. Judge Wolverton did little to control the fracas.

No nonsense, yet fair. Tells it like it is during sentencings. Lets defendants know the ball is now in their court to make the necessary life changes.

Judge complimented the attorneys for maintaining their dignity and their professionalism.

Firm with defense attorneys on leading questions.

I learn something new every time I go to his courtroom. Explanations are great.

## Current and Prior Evaluation Averages

District Court Judge Samuel D. Adams

2002: 3.9

Superior Court Judge Elaine M. Andrews

2002: 4.1

2000: 3.7

1998: 4.2

1996: 4.1

District Court Judge Peter G. Ashman

2002: 4.0

2000: 4.1

1998: 4.5

Superior Court Judge Harold M. Brown

2002: 4.1

Superior Court Judge Larry D. Card

2002: 4.1

2000: 3.9

1998: 4.4

1996: 4.6

Superior Court Judge Beverly W. Cutler

2002: 3.8

District Court Judge Natalie K. Finn

2002: 4.1

2000: 3.8

1998: 4.0

1996: 3.6

1994: (not evaluated)

1992: 4.2

Superior Court Judge Rene Gonzalez

2002: 4.1

2000: 3.7

1998: 3.8

1996: (not evaluated)

1994: 3.9

1992: 3.5

Superior Court Judge Dan A. Hensley

2002: 4.3

2000: 3.9

1998: 4.3

Superior Court Judge Donald D. Hopwood

2002: 4.0

2000: 4.2

1998: 4.1

Superior Court Judge Stephanie E. Joannides

2002: 4.0

2000: 4.0

1998: 4.4

1996: 4.1

Superior Court Judge Jonathan H. Link

2002: 4.1

Superior Court Judge John R. Lohff

2002: 3.9

2000: 3.8

1998: 4.0

1996: 4.2

1994: 4.1

District Court Judge Suzanne Lombardi

2002: 4.1

2000: 3.8

Superior Court Judge Peter A. Michalski

2002: 3.8

2000: 3.7

1998: 4.0

1996: 3.8

1994: 3.6

1992: (not evaluated)

1990: 3.8

1988: 3.3\*\*



District Court Judge Gregory J. Motyka  
2002: 4.2  
2000: 3.8  
1998: 4.1  
1996: 4.3  
1994: 4.2

Superior Court Judge Eric T. Sanders  
2002: 4.4  
2000: 4.1

Superior Court Judge Eric Smith  
2002: 4.2

District Court Judge Sigurd E. Murphy  
2002: 4.2  
2000: 4.0  
1998: 4.4  
1996: 4.4  
1994: 4.5

Superior Court Judge Sen K. Tan  
2002: 4.0  
2000: 3.9  
1998: 4.3

Superior Court Judge Fred Torrisi  
2002: 4.4

Superior Court Judge John E. Reese  
2002: 4.0  
2000: 3.8  
1998: 4.2  
1996: 3.9  
1994: 4.0  
1992: 4.0

District Court Judge James N. Wanamaker  
2002: 3.9  
2000: 3.7  
1998: 4.2  
1996: 4.0

District Court Judge Stephanie Rhoades  
2002: 3.9  
2000: 4.0  
1998: 4.0  
1996: 4.1  
1994: 3.9

Superior Court Judge Michael L. Wolverton  
2002: 4.1  
2000: 3.8  
1998: 4.4  
1996: 4.1  
1994: 4.2

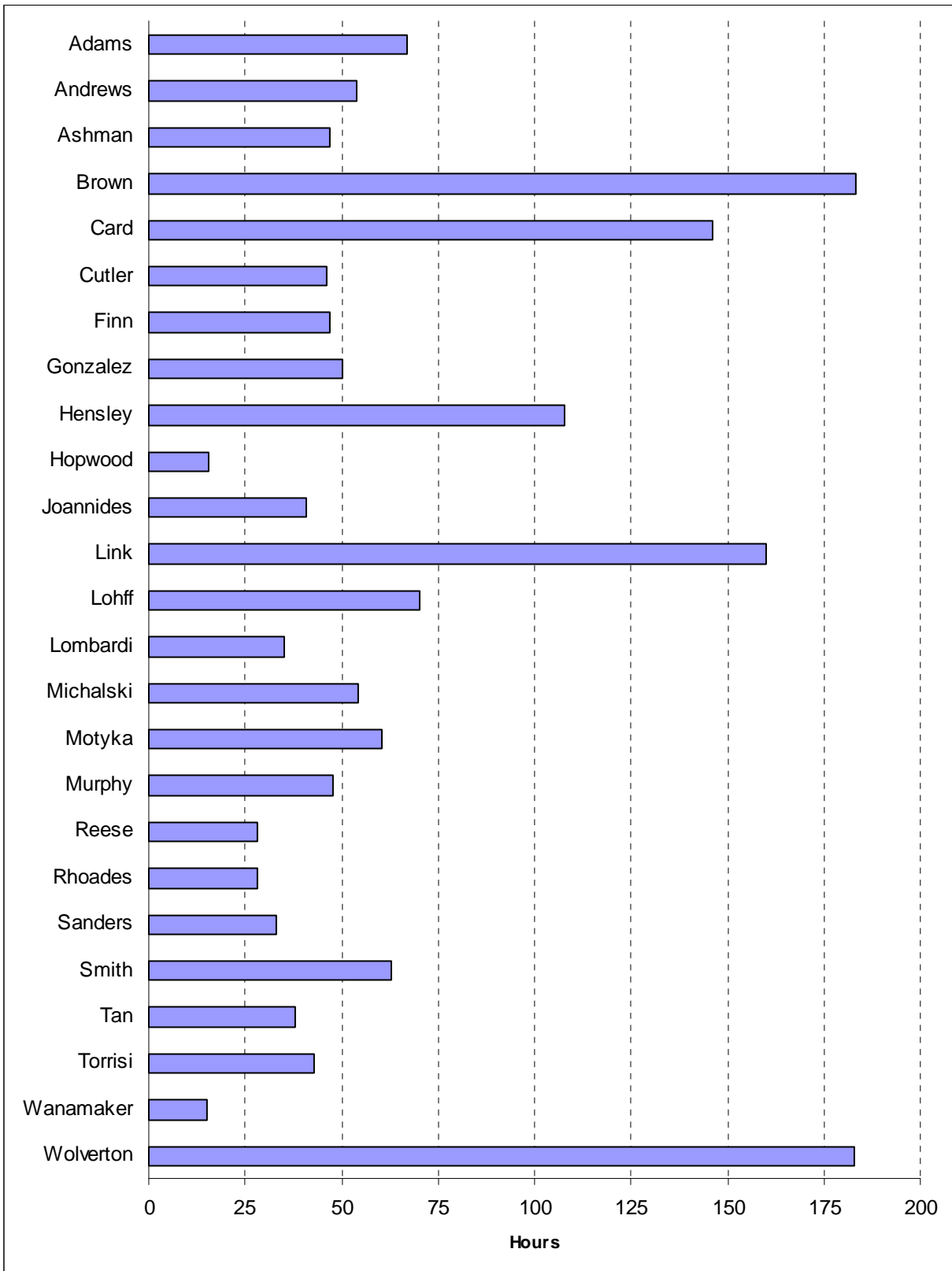
#### Scale

The CourtWatchers use a 1 – 5 scale in evaluating the judges.

- 1 - Poor
- 2 - Inadequate
- 3 - Acceptable/Average
- 4 - Good
- 5 - Excellent

\*\*1988 – 4.0 highest score – 1-5 scale not used.

## Judges Observations By Hours



# COURTWATCHERS

By Kathleen Rice, Director

CourtWatch is very fortunate to have a special group of dedicated men and women who donate their time to observe the Anchorage, Kenai and Palmer courts. Without these wonderful citizens, CourtWatch would not be able to maintain its high standards of judicial evaluations. They give their valuable time to learn more about the courts that impact our lives. I want to thank them so very much for their devotion, and let them know how privileged I feel to work with each and every one of them.

Those of us involved in non-profit organizations know the vital role that volunteers play in keeping our programs running smoothly and successfully. I have had the great fortune to work with someone who is responsible for not only making my job easier, but also helping make the growth of CourtWatch possible. For thirteen years **Pat Gallagher** has volunteered for CourtWatch and served as its Assistant Director. She has been the single most important individual in assuring that the high standard of volunteer training is met. Written words cannot express my thanks to her for all she does for CourtWatch and me. She is the epitome of what a volunteer is.

I also want to thank **Glen Denning** for his endless hours of computer work. His steadfastness and patience are next to none. The programs he has built have made it possible to produce this *Report* and will make it feasible to produce attorney evaluations in the very near future.

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