

Mentor Coaching for New Mexico Judges Survey Preliminary Findings

Table 1. Participants across court type

The survey had a total response rate of 46%, with 145 total participants. Probate judges are the group that responded with the highest response rate, followed by Metro.

Court	Survey participants	Survey population	Response rate
Appellate	5	9	56%
District	40	99	40%
Magistrate	28	66	42%
Metro	14	19	74%
Municipal	32	81	40%
Probate	25	33	76%
Supreme	1	5	20%
Grand Total	145	312	46%

Table 2. Participants by court and number of years as a judge

The largest share of respondents were judges on the bench for 3-8 years (40%), followed by judges on the bench for 0-2 years (23%).

Court	Years as a judge				Grand Total
	0-2 years	15+	3-8 years	8-15 years	
Appellate	3		1	1	5
District	14	4	12	10	40
Magistrate	3	7	11	7	28
Metro	2	3	6	3	14
Municipal	6	12	10	4	32
Probate	5		18	2	25
Supreme				1	1
Grand Total	33	26	58	28	145

Table 3. Would you have found a Mentor Coaching Program useful at the beginning of your judicial career?

The majority of survey participants (96%) believe that a Mentor Coaching Program would be useful. All six judges that did not agree that the program would be useful were judges 3-8 years into their judicial career.

	No	Yes	% Would find a Mentor Coaching Program useful at beginning of career
0-2 years			
Appellate		3	100%
District		14	100%
Magistrate		3	100%
Metro		2	100%
Municipal		6	100%
Probate		5	100%
3-8 years			
Appellate	1		0%
District	1	11	92%
Magistrate		10	100%
Metro		6	100%
Municipal	2	8	80%
Probate	2	15	88%
8-15 years			
Appellate		1	100%
District		10	100%
Magistrate		7	100%
Metro		3	100%
Municipal		4	100%
Probate		2	100%
Supreme		1	100%
15+			
District		4	100%
Magistrate		7	100%
Metro		3	100%
Municipal		11	100%
Grand Total	6	136	96%

Table 4. Do you believe a Mentor Coaching Program would be helpful to you at this point in your career?

Although almost all respondents stated that the program would be useful at the beginning of their career, only 68% indicated that the program would be useful at the current point in their career. The majority (91%) of the judges with the 0-2 years on the bench stated the program would be useful.

	No	Yes	% Would find a Mentor Coaching Program useful at this point in career
0-2 years			
Appellate		3	100%
District	2	12	86%
Magistrate		3	100%
Metro		2	100%
Municipal	1	5	83%
Probate		5	100%
3-8 years			
Appellate	1		0%
District	6	6	50%
Magistrate	3	7	70%
Metro	1	5	83%
Municipal	2	8	80%
Probate	6	12	67%
8-15 years			
Appellate		1	100%
District	4	6	60%
Magistrate	4	3	43%
Metro	2	1	33%
Municipal	3	1	25%
Probate	1	1	50%
Supreme	1		0%
15+			
District	1	3	75%
Magistrate	1	5	83%
Metro	2	1	33%
Municipal	4	7	64%
Grand Total	45	97	68%

Table 5. Challenges by court type

	Appellate	District	Magistrate	Metro	Municipal	Probate	Supreme	Grand Total
Challenges								
Attorney negligence		1						1
Lack of mentorship						1		1
Lack of support by Supreme Court			1					1
Actively listening and managing distractions		7	6	1	1	3	1	19
Appropriate use of social media as a judge	1	4		1	4	1		11
Auditors			2					2
Communicating effectively in my written opinions and/or oral communications from the bench	3	14	3	5	3	4		32
Communicating with the press		2	2		2			6
Courtroom demeanor		5	3	4	2	1		15
Difficulty enforcing my court orders		7		1	5			13
Discipline in getting decisions out promptly	3	16			1	1		21
Effective use of Odyssey to manage docket		1						1
Handling difficult personalities with staff, self-represented litigants, attorneys		20	8	5	9	4		46
Isolation of the job	3	23	14	8	10	3		61
Knowing the law and court procedures		3	8		5	7		23
Making hard decisions	1	13	3	3	11	2		33
Managing stressors of the job	3	18	7	7	8	2	1	46
Managing the balance between work and home life	4	18	5	3	2	3	1	36
Outdated Probate Judge Manual						1		1
Overcoming obstacles with technology	1	9	10	2	13	7		42
Pro se parties						1		1
Setting boundaries with attorneys in the courtroom		10	9	5	3	1		28
Setting boundaries with staff		5	3		5			13
Time management	3	17	7	5	5	1		38
Grand Total	22	193	91	50	89	43	3	491

Isolation on the job was the challenge most often selected, followed by handling difficult personalities and managing stressors.

Table 6. Challenges by years as a judge

Judges with 3-8 years on the bench reported the overall highest number of challenges.

	0-2 years	3-8 years	8-15 years	15+	Grand Total
Challenges					
Attorney negligence		1			1
Lack of mentorship		1			1
Lack of support by Supreme Court		1			1
Actively listening and managing distractions	3	7	3	6	19
Appropriate use of social media as a judge	2	4	1	4	11
Auditors			2		2
Communicating effectively in my written opinions and/or oral communications from the bench	9	11	6	6	32
Communicating with the press	1	2		3	6
Courtroom demeanor	2	6	5	2	15
Difficulty enforcing my court orders	1	7	3	2	13
Discipline in getting decisions out promptly	7	9	4	1	21
Effective use of Odyssey to manage docket			1		1
Handling difficult personalities with staff, self-represented litigants, attorneys	11	17	8	10	46
Isolation of the job	11	25	7	18	61
Knowing the law and court procedures	7	11	2	3	23
Making hard decisions	7	14	5	7	33
Managing stressors of the job	10	15	11	10	46
Managing the balance between work and home life	13	10	7	6	36
Outdated Probate Judge Manual	1				1
Overcoming obstacles with technology	8	11	6	17	42
Pro se parties		1			1
Setting boundaries with attorneys in the courtroom	7	9	5	7	28
Setting boundaries with staff	2	6	4	1	13
Time management	12	8	7	11	38

Grand Total

114

176

87

114

491