







## Overview of Strategic Planning Surveys (cont.)

- Survey #2: External partners / Stakeholders: point persons in key organizations sent the survey link to people who have interacted with/used the Court regularly over the past year. The groups included:
  - Private attorneys Tulare County Bar Association
  - Public Attorneys Prosecutors, Defense, County Counsel
  - Law Enforcement Sheriff's Dept, Police
  - County Probation Office
  - Public and Private Treatment Providers HHSA, CWS
  - County Leadership Appointed and Elected
- 5. <u>Survey #3</u>: Court Users included litigants, family members, members of the public, jurors, victims/ witnesses, etc. Also included were attorneys and other court partners who were doing business at the Court during the survey period and who did not previously complete the External Partner Survey.

2023			
Surveys	Total Surveyed (N= )	Number Responded (n= )	Response Rate (in %s)
Judges/ Employees	270 <sup>1</sup>	209	77%
External Partners	2	165	
Court Users	3	512	

 $^1$  285 judges/employees were on the original survey roster. However, 15 people were either on leave or out of the office during the survey period. Thus, the N size was reduced by 15 to N = 270.

<sup>2</sup> The total number of external partners who were sent the survey link is unknown. Instead of sending the link to partners directly, point persons from 27 partner organizations/agencies were instead asked to send out the link to people in their respective organizations who had frequent contact with the Court over the past 12 months.

3 The total number of court users at the Court during the survey period also is unknown. Anyone doing business with the Court during the survey period, was asked to complete the survey.









# Data Analysis & Interpretation

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



# Statistical Differences & Interpretation

**Testing for Statistical Differences** 

- 6. Two common statistical tests were used to test for significant differences between and among mean ratings:
  - Tests for differences in means (t tests) look for differences between 2 groups
  - Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) looks for differences among multiple groups
- Statistically significant differences are reported at the .05 or 95% confidence level (common for social science research)



- 8. Interpretation:
  - A difference in mean score is statistically significant if there is a less than 5% probability that the difference could have occurred by chance alone (significant at the .05 level)
  - Statistically significant differences in mean scores are noted with an \* (asterisk), pink shading, and/or a red star symbol:



























































### Q: Greatest Strengths of the Court External Partners – Themes/Summary of Comments (not in order of priority)

- 1. <u>Judicial Officers and Staff</u>: judges are impartial/render fair rulings; judges overall are doing a good job; most judges are qualified/competent, well-trained, even- tempered, & respectful; most judges take time to listen to litigants; staff and court clerks are helpful, friendly/personable, informative, resourceful, courteous, & responsive; bailiffs are helpful and polite; courtroom staff are helpful.
- 2. <u>Customer Service</u>: treat court users respectfully; prompt response time; compassionate; excellent customer service; professional; provide requested info in a timely manner.
- 3. <u>Assistance Provided to Litigants:</u> in house services/self-help resources and assistance; translations services.
- 4. <u>Accessible/e-access:</u> easy to access & navigate; information is accessible on website; e-courts is easy to access/use; access to forms; good location in community; making progress on e-filing; virtual access.
- 5. <u>Timeliness:</u> wait times in Room 201 are down; easy to calendar/schedule matters; most calendars are managed efficiently/ effectively; efficient court ops.; keep fast track schedules; cases move efficiently; continue virtual hearings/appearances.
- 6. Fair: handle matters fairly; give both parties a chance to be heard.
- 7. <u>Collaboration:</u> work well with justice partners/agency staff/stakeholders; communicate well with local bar; coordinate with county agencies.
- Security: good courthouse safety front door and bailiffs/deputies in courtrooms & presence/visible in courthouse; feels safe.
- <u>Facilities/Parking:</u> parking is free/covered; building is clean; make Visalia courthouse as nice as Porterville; adequate parking & signage.



- 1. <u>Judicial Officers and Staff</u>: hardworking & Knowledgeable judges/staff; professional, friendly, courteous, & inclusive; quality bench; judges are fair & listen to court users;
- 2. <u>Customer Service</u>: provide good customer service; respectful and professional treatment of everyone; assist court users in a timely manner.
- 3. <u>Assistance Provided to Litigants:</u> provide self-help services/assist pro per litigants; interpreter services; provide court users w/forms; great resource center.
- 4. Accessible/e-access: accessible by phone; access to public computers; improving online access; e-filing.
- 5. <u>Timeliness:</u> timely hearings; hearings start on time; open to remote appearances; some cases are on a fast track; process documents in a timely manner.
- 6. Fair: we have a concern for fairness as well as public safety; commitment to due process.
- 7. Security: it is a safe environment; safety measures have improved.
- 8. Facilities/Parking: cleanliness/well kept facility.
- 9. Leadership/Depts: excellent / strong leadership/CEO; strong/helpful HR dept; excellent IT dept.
- 10. <u>Work Environment/Communication:</u> good internal communication; teamwork; training, professional development, & advancement opps.; great environment; value staff.
- 11. Benefits: excellent health benefits/good health insurance; competitive pay & benefits.
- 12. Technology: expanding technology; upgrading equipment; access and security; willingness to adopt new technology.





















### Q: Suggestions for Making the Court a Better Place to Work Employees Only – Themes/Summary of Comments (not in order of priority)

- 1. <u>Team Building</u>: do more casual/social events (e.g., potlucks) to increase engagement & build relationships/ connections; conduct events/activities to get to know each other/bring people together; build camaraderie; more team mtgs.
- Work Environment/Culture: more morale building activities/use morale boosters; show you value staff appreciate & recognize staff (e.g., have an occasional "huddle" to highlight achievements/celebrate successes; promote a positive/ uplifting/fun/happy less punitive environment; provide incentives; implement flexible / hybrid (remote) work arrangements to improve work/life balance; make employee wellbeing a priority; increase/welcome diversity of all types.
- 3. <u>Education, Communication, Coordination</u>: improve internal communication; better communication & sharing information between Depts.; educate staff on policies/procedures.
- 4. <u>Training/Growth & Development:</u> provide/expand training/development opportunities; more cross training provide opportunities to grow, develop, advance at the Court; provide a training manual on procedures/work duties.
- 5. <u>Management Practices:</u> give positive reinforcement; show appreciation, less favoritism; seek equality in workloads/work production; improve employee retention; be interested in the opinions of staff; solicit input from staff when changing procedures; train managers/ sups; reduce us vs. them feeling (between admin/mgt/sups vs. staff)/improve relationship between mgt. & staff.
- 6. <u>Competitive Pay</u>: continue to seek competitive / increased pay.
- <u>Facilities</u>: improve / update Visalia facilities (e.g., stop leaks, clean, update remodel/paint, improve HVAC, etc.); need a new courthouse in Visalia; provide a cafeteria / vending machines with healthy food options; improve office/cubicle space; improve break / lunch areas/ other public areas; provide better employee parking; provide sit/stand desks;



### Q: Additional Comments/Suggestions for Improvement External Partners – Themes/Summary of Comments (not in order of priority)

- 1. <u>Enhance Access</u>: improve access to information; allow customers to file all types of cases in both Visalia and Porterville; educate more on e-filing; give attorneys access to the court system to look up documents, minute orders, etc. from their offices.
- 2. <u>Enhance Assistance/Expand Services</u>: enhance self-services; need a larger self-help center; add staff to provide assistance; expand use of virtual services; there is no cafeteria for victims/others who have to wait all day for their case to be heard.
- 3. <u>Virtual Proceedings:</u> expand & enhance virtual appearances increases efficiency; all depts. should embrace virtual appearances; develop formal & consistent policies/procedures for remote proceedings; give offices an option to appear virtually; limit the use of Zoom appearances.
- 4. <u>Improve Case Scheduling/Timely Resolution:</u> better scheduling is needed reduce wait times (for litigants, partners, law enforcement) & number of continuances; improve case mgt, which will Increase efficiency for everyone; stop cattle call calendars move to on-time scheduling; reduce backlogs (e.g., criminal docket); prelims need to be better organized (e.g., officers have to wait all day and then cases are frequently continued).
- 5. <u>Increase Professionalism of a Few Judges:</u> stop rude, verbally abusive, & unprofessional behavior of a few judges creates a hostile work environment; judges should treat all partners, litigants, victims/witnesses respectfully & fairly;
- 6. <u>Improve Facilities:</u> Visalia courthouse is outdated; need a new courthouse in Visalia current space is bad; Porterville Courthouse is a long distance for many to travel; seats inside & outside courtrooms are too low for people who use assistive walking equipment; it is difficult to access courtrooms/use the restrooms in the main courthouse when in a wheelchair;
- 7. <u>Modernize Technology</u>: improve Zoom set-up/technology (in Porterville); provide access the case information.

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### Q: Additional Comments/Suggestions for Improvement Court Users – Themes/Summary of Comments (not in order of priority)

#### 1. Customer Service:

- Many court users reported receiving excellent service; staff were helpful, professional, and treated them respectfully.
- Other court users reported: that they were not able to reach anyone by telephone; they had to make a trip to the courthouse because the phones went unanswered; some staff were rude/unprofessional/disrespectful they didn't take time to hear or listen to them/understand their needs; more staff are needed to provide assistance/answer questions (e.g., complete forms, understand procedures, etc.).
- 2. <u>Case Mgt/Timely resolution</u>: a few court users reported: waiting all day for their cases to be called (respond to subpoena) and then they were adjourned; hearings were not punctual; some judges / sheriffs / bailiffs were rude and impatient; it took a long time for a few court users' cases to be resolved they had to make multiple trips to the courthouse; need to stagger court hearings (not all scheduled at the same time); court date was changed and didn't get notice; it was difficult to hear / understand what was going on in the courtroom court user could hear the judge on the PA system, but not others.
- 3. <u>Facilities:</u> some court users reported not being able to find parking and/or had to park a long distance away (a couple gave rave reviews on free & accessible parking); elevators were slow/felt unsafe; updates are needed at the courthouse it is uninviting currently; had to travel too far to get to courthouse; need more chairs in high volume areas.
- <u>Technology/Remote Access</u>: phones need to be answered or court users need to have other ways (e.g., chat / email options) to reach the court without having to travel to the courthouse very inefficient; provide more virtual services; need a printer in the self-help office; need better stronger and dependable Wi-Fi.