



A L A S K A  
**Judicial Observers, Inc.**

2012 Biennial Report  
to the  
Alaska Judicial Council

*Increasing public awareness of our judicial system*

A L A S K A

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A Message from the Executive Director

We are pleased to present this *2012 Biennial Report* to the Alaska Judicial Council, the Alaska State Legislature and the citizens of Alaska.

Alaska Judicial Observers encourages citizens to become involved in the judicial process by volunteering to observe in courtrooms and we are proud to give citizens the opportunity to participate in the judicial process. By observing in courtrooms the volunteers are educated about the process and have the opportunity to make constructive comments regarding judicial performance.

The volunteers also gain an appreciation of our judicial system unfiltered by anything other than what they see and hear. The observations they make, as set out in this *Biennial Report*, are those of the people the judicial system serves. We sincerely hope that the perspective and comments they provide are of benefit to our judiciary.

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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.

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.

Alaska Judicial Observers volunteers are trained on the nature of judicial proceedings and on how to be good observers of those proceedings. The Alaska Judicial Council appreciates the work of Alaska Judicial Observers volunteers as an independent source of information about judges.

## **Alaska Judicial Observers, Inc. Program Information**

Alaska Judicial Observers, Inc. (AJO) is not affiliated with any advocacy, defense, prosecution or civil liberties group. We are the only independent court observer program in Alaska and one of a handful in the United States. It is because of this independence that we are able to collect neutral, unbiased evaluations and provide to the Alaska Judicial Council and the people of Alaska a report that reflects the citizen's perspective of judicial performance.

AJO produces a biennial report in even numbered years that sets out the results of evaluations conducted by its volunteers. AJO shares this report with the Alaska Judicial Council. Council members consider the report when they recommend whether voters should retain judges in office. The report is available to the public. This helps to enhance judicial accountability and promotes the public's understanding of the court system. AJO also provides the report to judges to help them improve their performance.

Volunteers are screened to ensure that they have not been a victim of a violent crime, have no criminal background and have no cases pending before the courts. Accompanied by the executive director, assistant director or a trainer, each volunteer goes through approximately 40 hours of classroom and courtroom training. Neutrality and objectivity are emphasized, as are the role of the observer to maintain an impartial attitude and to never make a personal judgment of guilt or innocence.

The criteria used for AJO's judicial evaluations have been reviewed by the Alaska Judicial Council. An evaluation form is filled out by the observer following each proceeding and volunteers are encouraged to include comments that reinforce their ratings. These comments are meant to be constructive, to help better shape an efficient and professional process and to assist legal professionals in showing sensitivity to any special needs of the public.

Court observers attend educational workshops where topics include sentencing, bail bonding, electronic trial preparation and jail and crime lab tours. The public defender, district attorney and judges all participate in an overview of their specific roles in the judicial process.

## Data For Judges Appearing In 2012 Biennial Report

Table 1. Evaluation hours, number of individual observers and 2012 overall ratings.

Judge's Name	Evaluation Hours	Number of Individual Observers	2012 Overall Rating
Eric Aarseth	34.8	15	3.53
Carl Bauman	78.8	7	3.32
Brian Clark	34.2	16	3.32
Catherine Easter	19.1	11	3.52
William Estelle	24.2	6	3.35
Andrew Guidi	22.7	14	3.29
Patrick J. Hanley	52.0	13	3.26
Gregory Heath	20.7	7	3.24
Charles Huguelet	20.1	2	3.23
Sharon Illsley	39.9	7	3.23
Kari Kristiansen	10.7	6	3.23
Patrick McKay	34.9	22	3.50
Anna Moran	45.5	6	3.24
William Morse	65.8	19	3.32
Gregory Motyka	32.8	16	3.55
Paul Olson	76.3	18	3.24
Frank Piffner	91.3	23	3.34
Stephanie Rhoades	39.8	20	3.48
Mark Rindner	42.0	21	3.39
Eric Smith	26.8	9	3.28
Jack Smith	84.6	23	3.33
Michael Spaan	70.4	21	3.46
John Suddock	77.1	21	3.48
Alex Swiderski	44.5	16	3.44
Sen Tan	40.8	19	3.75
Philip Volland	85.1	24	3.76
David Wallace	65.9	19	3.51
Pamela Scott Washington	48.9	17	3.18
Vanessa White	28.2	8	3.39
John Wolfe	28.7	8	3.19
Michael Wolverton	122.8	28	3.40
David Zwink	29.1	8	3.07
Total	<b>1538.5</b>		

Table 2. Evaluations categorized by criminal or civil case type.

Case Type	Count	Percentage
Civil Cases	519	39.4
Criminal Cases	797	60.6
Totals	<b>1316</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3. Evaluations categorized by case description.

Case Description	Count	Percentage
Arraignment	92	7.0
Change of Plea	62	4.7
Civil Trial	230	17.5
Criminal Trial	210	16.0
Domestic Violence Hearing	28	2.1
Jury Selection	61	4.6
Pre-indictment Hearing	2	0.2
Pretrial Conference	28	2.1
Sentencing	40	3.0
Small Claims	20	1.5
Trial Call	14	1.1
Other Hearings	529	40.2
Totals	<b>1316</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Data For Judges Not Appearing In 2012 Biennial Report

In many locations magistrates, masters, and judges pro tem also hear District and Superior Court proceedings. The following is the amount of time observers spent in those proceedings. Also listed are judges who were recently appointed to the bench or whose term ended during the evaluation period.

Table1. Evaluation hours.

Name	Title	Evaluation Hours
Peter Ashman	Judge pro tem	49.9
David Bauer	Magistrate	5.8
Larry Card	Judge pro tem	17.0
William Carey	Superior Court judge - Ketchikan	8.5
Matthew Christian	Magistrate	22.1
Jo-Ann Chung	District Court judge - Anchorage	14.6
Carmen Clark	Magistrate	5.7
Suzanne Cole	Master	11.8
Craig Condie	Magistrate	14.3
Beverly Cutler	Judge pro tem	8.0
Pat Douglass	Superior Court judge - Dillingham	1.8
William Fuld	Judge pro tem	4.7
Sharon Gleason	Judge (retired, now Federal judge)	21.5
Stephanie Joannides	Judge (retired)	7.4
Jonathan Lack	Master	5.2
Leonard Linton	Judge (acting)	10.2
Paul Malin	Judge (acting)	3.2
Warren Matthews	Judge (retired Supreme Court)	10.4
Peter Michalski	Judge (retired)	42.7
Gregory Miller	Superior Court judge - Anchorage	103.9
Nancy Nolan	Judge (acting)	24.3
Colleen Ray	Master	14.7
David Stewart	Judge (retired Court of Appeals)	23.0
Christina Teaford	Magistrate	2.1
Jennifer Wells	Magistrate	35.1
Total		<b>467.9</b>

## Data For All Judges Observed

The following data represents all activities by Alaska Judicial Observers volunteers from April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2012.

Table 1. Summary data.

Total volunteer hours	3529.8
Total evaluation hours	2006.4
Total evaluations	1728
Criminal evaluations	1033
Civil evaluations	695
Average evaluation hours	1.2

## Judicial Evaluation Criteria

Judges are evaluated using criteria reviewed by the Alaska Judicial Council. Evaluations focus on our perception of the judge's behavior and attitude at the bench. The ten criteria used by Alaska Judicial Observers are listed below. The first eight criteria are evaluated on a scale of one to five with the following meanings:

1 = poor    2 = deficient    3 = acceptable/average    4 = good    5 = excellent

The last two criteria describe specific behaviors.

**1) Did the judge pay attention to the proceedings and participants?**

- Did the judge pay attention when participants spoke?
- Did the judge watch for restless or napping jurors?
- Did the judge monitor the gallery?

**2) Did the judge maintain control of the courtroom?**

- Did the judge ensure the jury was attentive and that the gallery was quiet and respectful?
- Did the judge make sure attorneys behaved properly?
- Were disruptions or outbursts of emotion controlled?
- Were recesses called when emotions ran high?

**3) Did the judge speak loudly and clearly?**

- Were the judge's instructions and rulings clearly audible?
- Did the court microphones work effectively?

**4) Did the judge make remarks that were understood and that made sense?**

- Did the people involved in the case, including jurors, appear to understand the judge's remarks?
- Did the judge use many unfamiliar legal terms or did they speak in plain English?
- Did the judge take action to ensure that their remarks were understood?

**5) Did the judge show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff or victim?**

- Was the judge sensitive to the plaintiff's or victim's emotional situation?
- Did the judge display a negative attitude toward the plaintiff or victim?
- Did the judge treat the plaintiff or victim with respect and courtesy?
- During sentencing, did the judge tell the victim or their family about their right to present an impact statement?

**6) Did the judge show understanding and consideration to the defendant?**

- Was the judge sensitive to the defendant's emotional situation?
- Did the judge display a negative attitude toward the defendant?
- Did the judge treat the defendant with respect and courtesy?
- During sentencing, did the judge tell the defendant about their right to present a statement?

**7) Did the judge explain the proceedings to participants?**

- Were the judge's explanations and decisions understandable or confusing?
- Did the judge ensure that a defendant representing themselves understood the sequence of the proceedings?

**8) Did the judge treat all participants professionally?**

- Did the judge remain firm, fair and objective?
- Did the judge treat the attorneys with respect and as fellow professionals?
- Did the judge speak to all participants directly and appropriately?

**9) Did the judge favor either side? (yes / no)**

- Did the judge remain impartial in statements, attitude and actions?
- Did the judge insult or undermine either side?

**10) During sentencing, was the judge lenient, reasonable or severe?**

- Was the judge's explanation of the sentence reflected in the actual sentence?
- In consideration of the judge's explanation of the law, did you think the sentence was appropriate to the circumstances of the case?

## **Judicial Evaluations**

## The Honorable Eric Aarseth Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage Superior Court November 2005

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	34.8	Arraignment:	1	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	15	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	2
Positive Comments:	14	Civil Trial:	11	Sentencing:	2
Negative Comments:	6	Criminal Trial:	1	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	3	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	14
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>34</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.68
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.50
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.35
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.59
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.50
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.52
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.61
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.48
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.53</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	34 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	2 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	2

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Aarseth:

---

Polite to all and moved the trial along.

Worked to balance a "he said, she said" circumstance. Very patient with the pro per participants who didn't seem prepared for court.

Yawning.

Explained the court's order clearly and thoroughly.

The judge's explanations would be difficult to understand if one has not been in a legal proceeding before.

Generally speaking, everyone was difficult to hear.

I think the judge allowed indiscriminate comments between the pro per parties to proceed far too long.

Courteous to both parties.

In this hearing, both parties were pro per and the judge expertly led them toward solving their dispute. His impressive questions and counseling demeanor guided them toward a custody agreement. This was an efficient, humane and expert judicial performance

Not sure how any judge could keep their patience with this plaintiff's attorney – but this judge did.

The judge should be commended for showing an amazing level of patience dealing with the two pro per parties.

This was day two of a sentencing. It was hard to tell what was being said since the microphones seemed to be turned off.

Interacted with questions and clarification. Good control of attorneys and excellent understanding of the case before him.

Great explanations of his rulings and even better control of one disruptive attorney in this divorce hearing.

Waded through the details of the divorce with patience and gave both parties advice on how to better work with each other.

Spoke in a manner that could be heard and understood.

The judge took extra care to make sure the respondent understood what was expected of him during this divorce hearing.

## The Honorable Carl Bauman Kenai Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Palin to Kenai Superior Court August 2007

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	78.8	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	7	Change of Plea:	3	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	33	Civil Trial:	9	Sentencing:	4
Negative Comments:	4	Criminal Trial:	11	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	2	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	7	Other Hearings:	16
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>54</b>

---

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.34
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.36
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.25
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.38
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.34
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.28
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.34
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.23
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.32</b>

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<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	54 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

---

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	4 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	4

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Bauman:

---

The judge shows concern for people waiting on the phone and in the gallery.

Excellent explanations and control of the courtroom.

Very difficult to hear all participants today.

Very thorough and easy to follow and understand. Is great about soliciting input from all parties.

The judge was so patient, but not to the point of being helpful, with the pro per defendant.

The judge went through the Chaney criteria in an easy to understand manner during this sentencing. Great job.

It was an educational experience for all. The judge carefully explained the legal process.

Once again, the judge showed much patience when dealing with the pro per defendant.

The judge was so careful as he read the jury instructions to the jury. He asked that they not assume he was emphasizing anything if he inadvertently raised or lowered his voice.

Patient with pro per in this child custody hearing.

The judge checked with me to make sure I was not a witness or a party in another domestic violence case.

After the jury was selected and sent to the jury room, the judge did a great job of refereeing the spirited jousting between the attorneys regarding their opening statements.

I appreciate his humor while still maintaining complete control of his courtroom.

The judge expressed his concern regarding a flight risk during this bail hearing and set the bail accordingly.

Chaney criteria explained well.

Great explanation of each change of plea case.

The judge made it clear that he was not going to waste juror's time because the attorneys were not prepared. Great job.

Great explanation of the difference in misdemeanor and felony cases.

## The Honorable Brian Clark Anchorage District Court

---

Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage District Court January 2003

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	34.2	Arraignment:	6	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	16	Change of Plea:	1	Pretrial Conference:	2
Positive Comments:	17	Civil Trial:	3	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	2	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	3
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	2
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	13
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>33</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.45
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.38
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.27
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.24
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.30
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.42
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.27
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.25
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.32</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	33 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Clark:

---

With more than 60 arraignments, the judge made it clear to defendants what their rights were and dates of their court appearance – time after time after time after time.

Worked with an attorney to make sure the paperwork expressed the agreement properly.

Voice too low to be heard.

A machine could have done the same job as the judge during these arraignments today.

The judge was very attentive and patient with the new prosecutor.

The judge kept a calm demeanor in a chaotic courtroom, moving from one case to another.

The judge handled the very crowded courtroom with ease and efficiency.

The judge demonstrated the patience of Job in allowing one defendant to express dissatisfaction in lengthy fashion about scheduling glitches in the court system and his public defender.

Clear explanations to defendants of what they need to do to be prepared for trial.

Clear, straightforward, polite, thorough and patient.

Very patient and accommodating to a pro per participant.

Easy to follow his decision.

In my opinion, the judge did an excellent job in explaining to the pro per respondent how the case would proceed.

The judge took special care when explaining to a defendant about self-representation. Very easy to understand.

Did well advising a pro se defendant of their options regarding discovery.

Easy to understand.

This judge uses layman's terms in his explanations - very welcome.

Clear and concise.

Cleared up issues important for defendant before jury selection.

## The Honorable Catherine Easter Anchorage District Court

---

Appointed by Governor Palin to Anchorage District Court June 2008

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	19.1	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	11	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	16	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	1
Negative Comments:	3	Criminal Trial:	1	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	13
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>20</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.55
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.30
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.35
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.55
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.64
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.56
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.71
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.50
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.52</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	20 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	1 evaluation.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	1

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Easter:

---

The judge is a natural for the Wellness Court.

The judge gets high marks for her compassion and dialogue with each case.

With lots of voices and noise in the courtroom, the judge asked that people quit talking.

If the judge doesn't use the microphone, she is hard to hear and understand.

The judge stayed on top of everything during these trial call hearings.

The judge shows great organization and patience. She is clearly capable of keeping several balls in the air at one time.

Kindness and intelligent wisdom prevailed. She included family members in attendance in the proceedings. Clear and firm with defendants who were not in compliance in these CRP hearings.

Very attentive, understanding and in control during this hearing.

Patient with a long-winded attorney during closing arguments.

Very courteous and to the point.

Made sure a young defendant understood the impact of the lifestyle choices she was making.

Great job dealing with a rather contentious eviction hearing.

Efficiently dealt with all phases of her caseload without jeopardizing the defendant's day in court.

Epitomizes the fair and impartial jurist.

The judge's incisive questioning of witnesses led to a greater insight into the causes of this legal dispute.

Understandable details in the judge's explanations.

Personable, efficient, in charge and runs a great courtroom.

The judge clearly has a positive, professional and collaborative working relationship with all participants in these CRP cases.

## The Honorable William Estelle Palmer District Court

---

Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Palmer District Court June 2003

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	24.2	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	6	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	17	Civil Trial:	2	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	5	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	1
		Domestic Violence:	1	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	6
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>19</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.32
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.47
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.16
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.47
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.35
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.37
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.39
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.26
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.35</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	19 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Estelle:

---

Superb job explaining the basis for his decisions.

Very active in questioning of potential jurors during this observation.

Interesting and educational discussion regarding jury instructions.

Spent quite some time explaining court procedures to the pro per defendant.

Very difficult to hear.

The judge is very clear and thorough in explaining options to the defendants. In a negligent driving case, he asked many questions and was very involved in questioning both the officer and the defendant.

The judge went through cases quickly, almost by rote and with little expression. It must become almost automatic with so many cases. It just seemed he didn't care about much today.

When the public defender appeared ill-prepared for the upcoming case and asked to extend the trial date, the judge reminded all parties of the pretrial dates and denied the motion. Good job.

Good at extracting information from both sides and careful to clarify the testimony.

When a State attorney interrupted the judge several times, the judge firmly asked him to sit down and advised him that no one in his courtroom was going to demand him to stop speaking.

Seemed impatient.

The courtroom was crowded but quiet enough that all could be heard.

Wonderful job helping a young, first-time defendant understand how his rights would be impacted if his guilty plea was accepted.

The judge showed humor, compassion, attentiveness and encouragement during these hearings.

Remarks are easy to understand and make sense. Told one pro se defendant that when the emotional part of the brain fires up, the logic part shuts down and therein lies the danger of representing yourself.

Asked thoughtful and focused questions to get to the facts in these small claim cases.

Firm, fair and easy to understand.

## The Honorable Andrew Guidi Anchorage Superior Court

---

Appointed by Governor Parnell to Anchorage Superior Court July 2010

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	22.7	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	14	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	19	Civil Trial:	6	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	6	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	3	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	17
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>26</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.38
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.24
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.00
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.35
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.36
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.29
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.50
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.21
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.29</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	25 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	1 evaluation.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Guidi:

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Needs to speak up – very difficult to hear.

The judge explained the sensitivity of this children's case.

Bringing some humor into the proceedings helped to keep the participants at ease.

Caring and clear explanation to parents regarding custody arrangements.

The judge seemed distracted.

The judge kept excellent control despite contentious parties and at least six participants on the telephone.

The judge questioned both sides for clarification and later expressed appreciation of the research that had been done by the attorneys.

The judge demonstrated great care in examining the adoption petition while at the same time reinforcing the positive emotions felt throughout the courtroom.

Actively interacted with the attorneys.

Good use of microphones in the courtroom.

The judge was attentive to all witnesses and asked his own questions for clarification.

Judge was polite and asked questions. Very good.

The judge showed genuine concern for the plight of the parents and child whose custody was being determined.

The judge quickly established a rapport with the mother, the prospective guardians and the minor child whose guardianship was to be determined. The benevolent attitude did much to reduce the tension in the courtroom.

The judge is a calming and professional influence in the courtroom.

Difficult to hear.

Showed consideration for both parties, used humor to soften this conflicted situation and expressed appreciation for the parents cooperative attitude.

The judge was very soft spoken: His habit of putting his hand in front of his mouth makes understanding him more difficult.

**The Honorable J. Patrick Hanley**  
**Anchorage District Court**

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage District Court January 2005

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	52.0	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	2
No. of Observers:	13	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	19	Civil Trial:	4	Sentencing:	2
Negative Comments:	6	Criminal Trial:	7	Small Claims:	1
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	13
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>36</b>

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.28
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.14
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.00
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.26
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.42
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.37
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.34
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.29
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.26</b>

<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	36 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	2 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	2

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Hanley:

---

After the jury left the courtroom, the judge addressed an incident where the defendant had been seen trying to mouth something to the jury. The judge's calm, quiet handling of the situation allowed the trial to flow without a break and without distracting the jury from testimony.

Hard to hear in the back of the courtroom.

Explained his decision to each person in easy to understand terms during these eviction hearings.

The judge was serious and direct in addressing these minor consuming cases. He used his authority to assist a concerned and bewildered mother in some skills of tough love. Great job.

Time management of sentencing and an on-going trial was exceptional.

Kept rambling witnesses and irrelevant questioning on a tight leash.

The judge showed compassion and understanding in this presumptive death trial. He did an excellent job with all participants.

During these small claim cases, the judge explained how the court's mediation service works. I noticed these cases were done quickly, often with humor and without animosity between participants.

The judge explained the proceedings in precise and clearly understandable language.

The judge gave each defendant a letter written to the editor from a family whose daughter was killed in a crash caused by a drunk driver. Great idea.

Each time I've observed this judge, I have been impressed by his professionalism and consideration for the parties and jury.

With 153 cases on the docket, the judge somehow managed to maintain good order and decorum.

With an ill-prepared prosecutor, the judge had to continue this case. The judge was patient and polite but clearly unhappy about the delay.

The courtroom was noisy with people in and out, but the judge was easy to hear in spite of the noise.

Paid little attention to what was going on in the courtroom. I hope this was just a bad day for this judge.

Downright brusque with one attorney. I thought this was very rude.

## The Honorable Gregory Heath Palmer District Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Palmer District Court November 2003  
Appointed by Governor Palin to Palmer Superior Court July 2009

Evaluations	Case Types			
Evaluation Hours: 20.7	Arrestment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers: 7	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments: 11	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	2
Negative Comments: 2	Criminal Trial:	3	Small Claims:	0
	Domestic Violence:	1	Trial Call:	1
	Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	10
	<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>18</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.29
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.11
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.22
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.22
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.21
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.33
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.29
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.22
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.24</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	18 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	2 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	2

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Heath:

---

Went over past protective orders, but it was confusing as to what had taken place with the orders since the Alaska State Troopers records were missing from the file.

Sincere in wanting each participant to understand what is happening in CRP hearings.

There is a lot of interaction between the judge and each defendant during these CRP hearings.

Seems genuinely interested in each defendant and emphasized that it is up to them to turn things around in their lives.

Efficiently works through many cases quickly and thoroughly.

The judge is very positive and talked directly to the defendant regarding turning his life around.

Fair and considerate. Takes time with each defendant during these hearings.

The judge went over what evidence was admissible and gave a understandable decision.

Observant and great with the children that testified.

Handled a very aggressive attorney with a firm hand.

There was lots of noise in the courtroom during these hearings: In-custody defendants were talking and waving at family members and at people coming and going.

The judge's jury instructions were clear and understandable.

The judge imposed a reasonable sentence after reflecting on the defendant's prior history, existing charges and aggravators.

## The Honorable Charles Huguelet Kenai Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Superior Court September 2003

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	20.1	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	2	Change of Plea:	1	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	9	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	1	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	2	Other Hearings:	8
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>13</b>

---

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.46
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.17
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.23
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.23
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.00
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.36
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.31
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.10
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.23</b>

---

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	13 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

---

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## **Comments**

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Huguelet:

---

When the attorneys became argumentative, the judge sent the jury out and got things back on track.

Lack of courtroom control. Gallery movement, talking and cell phones were not noticed by the judge.

The judge's compassion and concern was evident during this custody hearing.

Gave sound and thorough reasoning for granting third party custody over objections of the District Attorney's office.

The judge encouraged the defendant to continue his efforts to straighten out his life.

Made more than one comment that the parents' actions were placing children in the middle of their battle.

Great job by the judge during this representation hearing. The judge approached the topic in numerous ways and showed patience and understanding.

The judge was very good at explaining the process and rights given up during this change of plea.

Professional and at the same time uses an appropriate sense of humor.

When needed, made quick clarification for the benefit of the jury and all participants.

**The Honorable Sharon Illsley**  
**Kenai District Court**

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Appointed by Governor Palin to Kenai District Court June 2007

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	39.9	Arraignment:	11	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	7	Change of Plea:	10	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	22	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	10	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	23
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>47</b>

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.21
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.17
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.06
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.28
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.27
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.31
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.34
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.22
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.23</b>

<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	47 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Illsley:

---

The judge has a warm, pleasant demeanor and her explanations are excellent.

The judge is soft spoken and difficult to hear in the gallery.

Took the extra time to explain the court's acceptance of guilty pleas during these change of pleas.

The judge has a warm, caring demeanor from the bench and this manifests itself in excellent and personalized explanations.

Again, a great job with minors.

I truly appreciate the efforts the judge makes with minors.

Great job going over the responsibilities of a potential third-party custodian.

Thorough and firm when looking into a request for a defendant to be released for a doctor's appointment.

The judge is easy to hear and it is easy to understand her explanations to all the participants.

The judge was understanding of the defendant's young age and sent their case to Youth Court.

Extradition Waiver was explained completely in a way that all could understand.

Lots of distractions in the gallery that continued throughout my observation.

The defendant was pro per and the judge took extra time to make sure she understood the procedures and filing requirements before the jury entered the courtroom.

Since one of the defendant's attorney was not present, the judge made sure the defendant knew he had the right to maintain his silence and should do so.

Seemed lenient in the bail hearings today.

The judge gave a firm pep talk about making better choices to an 18-year-old defendant.

I've noticed that there is more chatter in the gallery than I observe in other courtrooms.

Patient and took extra time to try to calm a very emotional defendant.

## The Honorable Kari Kristiansen Palmer Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Palmer Superior Court November 2006

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	10.7	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	6	Change of Plea:	1	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	5	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	0	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	5
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>10</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.20
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.20
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.20
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.20
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.25
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.29
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.29
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.22
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.23</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	10 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## **Comments**

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Kristiansen:

---

Went through each case thoroughly, making sure attorneys had all the pertinent information on each case.

Spoke clearly and was easy to understand.

A change of plea was continued after the judge found the victim notification was not complete.

The judge was very accommodating and advised each party which forms were still needed before the case could be closed during this uncontested legal separation.

A defendant brought a small child to the courtroom. The judge stated this was both inappropriate and unacceptable, explaining there was always a possibility that the defendant could be taken into custody.

## The Honorable Patrick McKay Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage Superior Court November 2005

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	34.9	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	22	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	28	Civil Trial:	25	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	5	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	3	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	14
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>44</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.57
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.48
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.40
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.48
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.53
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.59
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.53
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.39
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.50</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	44 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge McKay:

---

The judge worked to bring the parties to an agreement on an evidence issue. Attentive and engaged with both attorneys. A very good judge in my opinion.

The judge's calm and patience was a good model for the frustrated defendant on the witness stand. The judge quickly took control when the defendant and the plaintiff's attorney began exchanging barbs.

Interesting to watch the judge keep his patience with an ill-prepared and somewhat combative attorney. Great job.

The court relied on a translator and there was a problem with the defendant's understanding some questions. The judge was patient and encouraging.

Kept the parties focused.

The judge took great care in explaining the finality of the proceedings and was wonderful in calming the emotions of the participants.

The judge handled a couple of points of contention between the parties with tact and a spirit of cooperation.

The judge depicted the respondent as arrogant and irresponsible with respect to child support. He then substantiated each of those claims. Similarly, the complainant's evasive testimony was also met with the judge's disapproval. Despite the trying circumstances, the judge acted fairly and impartially.

The judge provided positive guidance to both divorced parents on how to best support their child.

Kept the parties on track. Considerate of police officer's time and the expense while considering when or if the officer was needed.

The judge did not allow the participants to go off on a tangent unrelated to the issues at hand.

The judge was very attentive and patient with the young plaintiff who was learning challenged. I felt the judge was a great advocate for this minor.

Very patient with pro per plaintiff.

The judge navigated through numerous property issues to arrive at a divorce settlement that seemed to appease both parties.

The judge made sure the child was not present as parents worked out their differences. Also made sure both parents referred to the child as "ours" and made encouraging final remarks.

## The Honorable Anna Moran Kenai Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Palin to Kenai Superior Court March 2007

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	45.5	Arraignment:	1	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	6	Change of Plea:	4	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	26	Civil Trial:	8	Sentencing:	4
Negative Comments:	2	Criminal Trial:	3	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	22
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>43</b>

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<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.33
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.16
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.37
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.13
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.29
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.23
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.25
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.15
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.24</b>

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<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	43 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

---

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	4 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	4

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Moran:

---

Clearly stated her concerns regarding the defendant's repeat offenses and the need to protect the public during this sentencing.

Listened to both attorneys and gave a concise explanation of sentencing decision.

I was impressed with how the judge worked to make sure the pro per defendant understood when objections were overruled or sustained.

Crisp and clear and makes strong remarks without speaking down to defendants.

The judge was very clear and you could easily understand remarks that were made.

Made sure both parties understood all the points and decisions made during this divorce hearing.

Although somewhat chaotic because of people coming and going from the courtroom, the judge did a fine job of keeping these hearings on track.

It was striking how well the judge could control the proceeding. Great job.

Great listening skills.

Really tries to work with both parents in custody cases.

The judge did a wonderful job in this custody modification hearing.

Thorough explanation in adjudicating this no contact order.

The judge is very thorough in her thoughts and statements. She showed concern for all parties, including the safety of the public.

The judge went point-by-point so that she and both parties were in agreement of what had been stated. She shows an understanding of highly emotional moments without being judgmental.

Respondent had questions regarding child support and the judge had difficulty in her explanation – she was hard to follow.

Considerate to all parties and apologized for the court setting the date of this sentencing so close to the date of the victim's death.

Great job working with all parties for a solution to interim custody issues.

Calm, firm and kept the trial moving forward despite multiple objections from attorneys.

## The Honorable William Morse Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court February 2002

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	65.8	Arrestment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	19	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	34	Civil Trial:	29	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	8	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	1	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	24
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>55</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.39
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.33
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.15
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.37
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.29
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.28
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.46
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.31
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.32</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	55 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Morse:

---

The judge helped the parties reach an agreement regarding a custody modification. It was a pleasure to watch him calmly handle the battle between these parents.

In an obviously contentious divorce, the judge maintained order by reminding the attorneys of their responsibilities and letting them know he wouldn't tolerate nonsense.

The judge balanced the custody arrangements and noted he looked forward to the young child's success with the help of both parents.

Great explanation of the PACE program, the responsibilities of the defendant, and the role of the probation officer and the court.

Court was running an hour late and no explanation was given.

The judge kept proceedings moving along and was direct in his expectations and consequences with each participant before him.

I have sat in on trial proceedings with this judge before and I'm still puzzled by his attitude. He appears bored, impatient and can be very rude to all participants.

The judge asked lots of questions during this divorce trial and seemed to work well with the pro per plaintiff.

After speaking to the parents about his preference to have the parents work out the details by talking to each other rather than having him make a decision, the judge was able to facilitate an agreement between the parents during this custody hearing. Great job.

The only disappointment in the judge's courtroom management is that his voice is hard to hear: His enunciation is unclear at times with his hand resting on his chin.

Excellent control of his courtroom. He stopped participants from speaking over each other, worked well with both parties and his explanations were clear and easy to understand.

After the hearing was complete, the judge came off the bench to ask if we, as observers, had any questions or suggestions. It was much appreciated.

Excellent judge. Made good points and asked questions to clarify statements made by witnesses and attorneys.

## The Honorable Gregory Motyka Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Hickel to Anchorage District Court July 1991

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	32.8	Arrestment:	4	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	16	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	17	Civil Trial:	5	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	4	Criminal Trial:	1	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	14
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>27</b>

---

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.44
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.44
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.60
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.59
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.54
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.56
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.71
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.52
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.55</b>

---

<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	27 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

---

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Motyka:

---

Managed the people in the gallery. The best I've seen any judge do when dealing with multiple cases and attorneys.

Efficiently handled multiple cases in a short amount of time.

Seemed very disinterested in the case. Head in hands and looking down for a good portion of the hour I was in the courtroom.

Looked sleepy.

The plaintiff's attorney had a disrespectful tone and appeared to be running the courtroom.

Patient, great explanations of rights and possible consequences and control of the courtroom.

Unlike many other judges who make blanket explanations of the rights and procedures, this judge takes the time to explain them to each defendant individually.

Fairly straight forward. Great explanation to one participant regarding an eviction.

Gave excellent explanations of options for the cases before him.

The judge did his job carefully, making sure all participants understood what was happening during this hearing which needed the aid of an sign language interpreter.

Clear decisions and easy to understand.

The judge was very patient with the interrupter and defendant in his questions and explanations. It was interesting to hear and observe.

When the hearings were done, the judge came down to the gallery to speak to a small group of Boy Scouts that were observing in his courtroom. He asked them if they had any questions and spoke with them for half an hour.

The judge was thorough and gentle when explaining the procedure during these eviction hearings.

The judge spoke sharply to an attorney, telling him to let the witness answer before posing another question. The attorney needed to be reminded who was in charge of this trial.

The judge works very efficiently through these numerous arraignments.

## The Honorable Paul Olson Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Parnell to Anchorage District Court January 2010

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	76.3	Arraignment:	5	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	18	Change of Plea:	3	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	30	Civil Trial:	3	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	9	Criminal Trial:	13	Small Claims:	2
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	28
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>54</b>

---

### Did the judge . . .

(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)

. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.20
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.24
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	2.94
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.21
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.27
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.41
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.50
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.15
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.24</b>

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### Did the judge appear to favor either side?

Did not favor either side: 53 evaluations.  
Favored the defense: 1 evaluation.  
Favored the prosecution: 0 evaluations.

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

Lenient: 0 evaluations.  
Reasonable: 0 evaluations.  
Severe: 0 evaluations.  
Total Sentencings: 0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Olson:

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Very hard to hear in the back of the courtroom.

Understanding and respectful during these eviction hearings.

The judge showed patience in keeping the pro per defendant's emotions in check and their statements on track.

The judge does a thorough job instructing youthful offenders on how to avoid mistakes and how to follow through on court orders. He includes parents when offenders are under age. Impressive example of justice being served.

During a discussion about jury instructions, it was very clear the judge was the boss.

Handled two very inexperienced attorneys with patience and respect.

Did I hear the judge refer to in-custody defendants as the "chain gang"?

Went above and beyond to ensure all participants understood what was taking place as it related to their cases during these change of pleas.

Very empathetic and patient with an emotional defendant.

English was not the defendant's first language and the judge took special care with the interpreter to make sure the translation was complete and accurate.

Before including the victim in the court proceedings (by telephone), the judge insisted the prosecutor speak privately to the victim regarding the hearing.

Several outbursts by defendants were well controlled.

A defendant was confused as to what was going on with his case and the judge patiently explained the man's rights and how the case would proceed.

Explanations are in layman's language and thorough. Efficient, courteous, respectful and patient without being patronizing.

Very orderly process. Although the attorneys used acronyms, the judge did not, making the proceedings much easier to understand.

Very good with pro per participants.

The judge had his patience tried and he passed the test.

It was difficult to hear the judge. After an attorney asked the judge to repeat himself a few times he spoke louder and that helped.

## The Honorable Frank Pfiffner Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Parnell to Anchorage Superior Court October 2009

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	91.3	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	23	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	31	Civil Trial:	33	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	10	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	5	Other Hearings:	30
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>69</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.36
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.38
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.28
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.40
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.24
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.26
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.48
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.35
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.34</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	69 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Pfiffner:

---

This is my second observation of this judge in recent weeks. Both times he has propped his head on his hand and looked to be dozing.

The judge knew the history of each case. He was considerate of every individual and emphasized that the welfare of the child was the primary concern. He extended concern beyond the immediate issues of the day.

Great explanations of all decisions.

As I see it, the judge is a reckoning force in the courtroom. Not intruding on the proceedings, but as an understanding guide and enforcer that makes sure things happen properly.

A 15 minute break *means* 15 minutes.

In spite of an attorney's request to let the respondent use English, the judge asked for an interpreter since English was not his first language.

The judge did a good job of keeping the parties focused on the best interests of the children while also making sure each parent was allowed to express their concerns regarding various issues.

The judge took careful consideration of the welfare of the children.

The judge spoke sharply to the plaintiff's attorney, reminding him just who was in charge. Great job.

Great explanation of the Alaska statute regarding genetic testing.

Before this proceeding started, the judge expressed his concerns and questioned whether the defendant was fully informed and wanted to proceed: The defendant had a pending criminal case that could be affected by testimony she might give in the civil case.

Very active in this child custody hearing. Both parties were pro per and the judge, showing much patience, explained in great detail how the hearing would proceed.

This adoption was so positive and the courtroom was filled to capacity with family. The judge was genuinely moved and invited all in the courtroom to celebrate the newly created family.

The judge was very difficult to hear.

## The Honorable Stephanie Rhoades Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Hickel to Anchorage District Court July 1992

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	39.8	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	20	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	36	Civil Trial:	4	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	7	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	5
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	29
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>43</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.56
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.52
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.42
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.44
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.56
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.44
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.46
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.42
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.48</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	43 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Rhoades:

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The judge manages her courtroom with efficient organization. I like her energy, informality and firmness. Her decisions show wisdom and empathy with a refusal to enable.

The judge showed compassion and restraint, reprimanding those who failed and complimenting those who were compliant.

The judge's clear voice is easily heard. She listens thoughtfully to all participants. She clearly empathizes with their issues as she firmly makes decisions that she thinks will ensure rehabilitation and might prevent continued criminal behavior. She serves this specialty court's mission very well.

The judge's eye contact and voice inflections carry as much of a message as her words.

I was very impressed with the judge's control of the courtroom. The two parties were there to argue, but the judge made sure they resolved a dispute.

Impatient and short-tempered with both attorneys and defendants.

Allows participants to ask questions and answers them on a level they can understand. Shows great patience.

Lots of acronyms used in these CRP hearings. It would be helpful to have a handout so observers could have a better understanding of these cases.

The judges explained how mediation works and the benefits of using the service. She showed a lot of common sense and courtesy to all during these hearings.

Running almost an hour late with no explanation.

Keeps a very tight leash on a chaotic courtroom during the CRP hearings.

Excellent job controlling an argumentative defendant that was testifying by telephone.

The judge is compassionate, but she is no pushover.

The judge's knowledge of community-based treatment options and resources was impressive.

Some defendants may have felt the judge was too curt with them for failing to meet her expectations, but I found her attitude and actions appropriate.

## The Honorable Mark Rindner Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court October 2000

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	42.0	Arrestment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	21	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	22	Civil Trial:	26	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	5	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	2	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	17
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>46</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.41
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.35
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.33
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.41
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.34
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.37
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.57
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.31
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.39</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	46 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Rindner:

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The judge valued time and resources as he cautioned parents against spending more on attorneys than the small amount of child support in dispute.

The judge was extremely patient in dealing with the pro per parties. Their descriptions of events were disorganized, confused and poorly worded, but the judge continued patient questioning until he got to the matter at hand. His orders were firm and clear. The judge obviously cared about what would occur in the future between these troubled parents. I was impressed.

In all the domestic violence cases, the judge made certain the language, proceedings and consequences were understood by all participants.

Kept the plaintiff's attorney on track during the jury selection, reminding him that it was jury selection, not closing arguments.

The judge spoke in a clear and understandable manner. Showed patience to both parties .

My first impression of this judge is not favorable.

The judge is a perfect fit for Care Court. He encourages, builds confidence and compliments good judgment when it's used. He individualizes his demands for accountability. He took a tough stance toward those not attending their AA or NA meeting. Wonderful to observe this judge today.

Asked if jurors had any questions for a witness – nice touch.

The judge gave these parents a wonderful talk about better communications regarding their children.

The judge demonstrated a profound interest in the recovery and rehabilitation of defendants in these hearings.

Explained in detail to a pro per defendant why an evidentiary hearing was needed. Well done.

The judge spoke sternly to both parties because their claims against each other contradicted earlier statements. He urged them to cooperate, and his words and tone made it clear he was perturbed with their lack of cooperation. Good job.

The judge provided thoughtful guidance to a divorced couple trying to construct a parenting plan for their children. His insights should greatly enhance their efforts and the welfare of their children.

## The Honorable Eric Smith Palmer Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Palmer Superior Court April 1996

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	26.8	Arraignment:	1	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	9	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	10	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	10	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	1
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	2
		Jury Selection:	3	Other Hearings:	18
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>28</b>

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<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.35
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.29
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.15
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.30
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.29
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.28
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.30
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.27
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.28</b>

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<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	28 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

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<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Smith:

---

A defense attorney was a no-show and couldn't be contacted for quite some time. When the attorney finally contacted the court, the judge made a big joke about it and let it go. Waste of court time and I didn't see the humor.

Very difficult to hear.

The judge appeared to allow the defense attorneys to set the agenda.

Although rightfully frustrated with this hearing, the judge was fair and listened to the pro per defendant.

Painfully slow moving case. Just didn't seem to be able to get one attorney to move through details from months earlier.

Tolerant of pro per defendant's mistakes and lack of any legal knowledge. It must be difficult to remain so patient.

Very patient with a respondent on the telephone.

The judge did not accept excuses from potential jurors requesting to be dismissed.

The judge was attentive, clarified questions, and showed insight and fairness during this small claims case.

Moved through many cases efficiently.

The judge was very patient with an argumentative attorney.

With the jury out of the room, there continued to be heated exchanges between the judge and the defense attorney. The attorney would have challenged anyone's patience, but the judge did a good job handling her.

In spite of the chaos, the judge got through the cases quickly and efficiently.

There were problems with the microphones, required people were not present, attorneys came and went, and trying to get people on the phone was time consuming.

Thoughtful and clear in his decisions.

Well-explained plea agreement.

Private conversations (legal and otherwise) in the gallery made it hard to hear from the back of the courtroom.

Difficult to hear.

## The Honorable Jack Smith Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage District Court January 2002  
Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage Superior Court November 2006

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	84.6	Arrestment:	4	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	23	Change of Plea:	1	Pretrial Conference:	3
Positive Comments:	38	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	7
Negative Comments:	13	Criminal Trial:	38	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	9	Other Hearings:	17
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>79</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.46
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.31
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.16
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.22
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.44
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.35
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.40
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.28
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.33</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	79 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	7 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	7

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Smith:

---

At times, I couldn't hear a thing in the gallery.

The judge listened attentively as each attorney explained their recommendations for probation. He commended both attorneys for their preparation and noted the district attorney's respect for this defendant's contribution to the community prior to this crime of perjury. The sentence was concisely stated and well explained.

Multiple negations of bail showed the judge was very concerned with the dangers the defendants presented to the community when they had not followed their conditions of release.

Great explanation of hearsay evidence. I learned quite a few new things today. The judge gave very understandable explanations.

Patiently and quickly handled one potential juror that was giving inappropriate answers during voir dire.

The judge's explanations seemed minimal, matter of fact, and he did not seem to care if defendants understood. Is this because these hearing were at the end of the day?

Many acronyms used – lots of legal jargon and couldn't hear much over all the chatter in the courtroom

When voir dire went in circles, the judge called both parties to the bench and the questioning of potential jurors quickly got back on track.

Correctly pointed out a significant error in the calculation of the restitution amount.

I was pleasantly surprised to be able to hear the judge and the attorneys throughout this sentencing.

I was impressed with the judge's thoroughness when questioning the representative of an alcohol/GPS monitoring service: He wanted to understand the details of the equipment science. An involved and attentive judge.

The judge clarified points of law for the attorneys, explaining his decisions in a way that was easily understood.

The judge was hard to follow since he spoke so quickly and used so many acronyms.

## The Honorable Michael Spaan Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage Superior Court November 2007

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	70.4	Arrestment:	7	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	21	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	3
Positive Comments:	27	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	2
Negative Comments:	11	Criminal Trial:	25	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	4	Other Hearings:	15
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>58</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.47
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.45
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.40
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.49
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.51
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.43
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.52
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.43
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.46</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	56 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	2 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	2 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	2

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Spaan:

---

I felt the judge ignored the defendant and seemed to dislike the public defender.

The judge handles cases on their individual merits, solving problems pragmatically and accepting minor corrections from an attorney with grace and aplomb.

Calm and in control when dealing with the defendant's outburst.

Very active participant. Explanations to jury regarding testimony was excellent. Moved proceeding along – no time wasted.

I was impressed by the judge's efforts to explain how the case would proceed and his efforts to ensure his explanation was understandable.

Two defendants asked the judge to further explain their rights. He seemed happy to answer their questions and showed no impatience.

Oblivious to gallery – crying babies and one person sleeping.

When the judge overruled an objection, he gave a thorough explanation.

Great job of explaining a concurrent sentence and the mitigators that he was considering.

As noted in prior observations, the judge seems to really enjoy his job and the people in his courtroom.

An unprofessional public defender made these hearings confusing, but the judge stepped in and got things back on track.

Stood his ground when a bail reduction was requested for a very serious case.

It is hard to tell if the judge is listening, as he kept his head down and his back to the witness who was testifying.

Spoke well, explained his decisions and moved the trial along with patience and a calm demeanor.

The judge encouraged an emotional witness to take a few moments to regain her composure. This contributed to an orderly and dignified courtroom.

Friendly and even funny at times. A little humor can be a good thing, even in a courtroom.

## The Honorable John Suddock Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court November 2002

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	77.1	Arrestment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	21	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	38	Civil Trial:	30	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	13	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	4	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	40
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>76</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.49
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.47
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.39
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.58
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.45
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.47
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.62
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.40
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.48</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	76 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Suddock:

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Matter-of-fact, polite and didn't waste time. Explanations were thorough and in language that was easy to understand.

Why can't judges make sure they can be heard throughout the courtroom?

Did a great job getting attorneys to come to an agreement regarding this custody case.

At times the judge appeared inappropriately irritated.

There was a language barrier and the judge handled this well. He really tried to explain the procedure of the court to people of a very different culture. I viewed his efforts as admirable.

The judge was very helpful in resolving issues during this visitation modification hearing.

With some participants testifying from out-of-state, the judge explained the process and was attentive and respectful to all.

The judge repeatedly mixed up the parties' names.

The words the judge used came across as rude rather than authoritative or professional.

The judge's handling of a courtroom spectator and a cousin of the plaintiff who threatened to disrupt the proceeding was particularly impressive.

The judge definitely controlled the arguments, spoke well and explained the legalities behind his rulings. Many clarifications were given in detail.

The judge was excellent during this hearing, asking many questions and showing patience with both parties.

Despite the defendant's absence in the courtroom, the judge once again proved he could be fair to both parties.

I have observed nearly five hours of court time in which this judge presided. The judge has always been firm, impartial and most helpful to all parties. This observation was no exception.

Patient with a sense of humor.

The judge's command of the legal issues in this visitation case were exceeded only by his interpersonal skills when dealing with each of the parties and the child's needs.

## The Honorable Alex Swiderski Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Anchorage District Court April 2005

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	44.5	Arraignment:	2	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	16	Change of Plea:	1	Pretrial Conference:	4
Positive Comments:	14	Civil Trial:	5	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	9	Criminal Trial:	6	Small Claims:	2
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	1	Other Hearings:	12
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>34</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.53
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.44
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.18
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.45
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.45
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.52
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.60
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.38
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.44</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	34 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Swiderski:

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The judge initially said he needed to review a criminal file, but when he found it had been handled in another court, he said he wasn't going to get the file because it would be "more difficult." It seems to me that if you need the information, you need it whether or not it is more difficult to obtain.

Just after one hearing began, a person in the gallery asked if he could translate for the defendant. The judge allowed it, but did not go back to determine whether the defendant had understood everything that had already occurred.

Very good with explanations in these minor yet consuming hearings.

Hard to hear.

Attentive to all.

The judge agreed to allow a representative number of animals in court during this cruelty to animals trial. Also said he would have to sanction an attorney if the behavior exhibited previously was repeated.

The judge considered the needs of all, modeling calmness, objectivity and appreciation for the participants.

Lots of distractions going on in the back of the courtroom.

Difficult to hear. I thought it might be the microphone, but I later observed another judge using the same courtroom and that judge's voice was clear and easily understood.

Made it clear that discovery by both parties was taking too long.

Took time to explain choices and consequences to the parties in this small claims case.

The judge bent over backwards to assist the pro se defendant.

The judge really listened to testimony, asked questions and was patient throughout this hearing.

Worked very well with all parties in this custody case.

The judge gave the pro se defendants some general guidelines, but also advised them that he could not provide legal advice.

Showed a great deal of patience with the pro per defense.

## The Honorable Sen Tan Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court December 1996

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	40.8	Arraignment:	0	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	19	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	3
Positive Comments:	26	Civil Trial:	13	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	2	Criminal Trial:	0	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	2	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	17
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>35</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.80
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.85
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.54
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.80
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.67
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.70
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.93
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.68
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.75</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	35 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Tan:

---

The judge definitely enjoys the verbal engagement with the attorneys and was very involved in the discussion, continuously challenging the legal arguments presented by both sides.

Asked clarifying questions of a witness from a treatment facility. It appeared the judge believed the treatment program might not be performing adequate or truly random alcohol and drug testing, and that it might have inadequate recordkeeping.

While the judge assisted the respondent and was more apt to question the complainant, I felt this was in order to balance the situation since one party had an attorney and the other was pro per. Great job.

The judge's careful words and timing let each side have their say without anyone beginning to get argumentative.

The judge quickly refocused both parties when the proceedings were bogged down by petty squabbling,

The judge's upbeat attitude helped break the tension of an emotional hearing.

The judge showed excellent control of the proceeding and sensitivity to the parties' lack of knowledge of legal process.

The judge took time to ensure that both parents, who were young and representing themselves, understood the process of the proceeding. He went through the case file with them step-by-step and allowed questions and used gentle humor when answering questions that might have annoyed other judges. Mediation versus a custody trial was explained and he encouraged them to try to reach an agreement – which they did.

The judge quickly picked up on negative body language of the defendant to a particular issue of the custody modification agreement. The matter was sorted out due to the judge's intervention. Great job.

Genuine concerns are explained very well to both sides. In comparison to other judges, he comes across as better in expressing himself.

The judge showed true concern for the defendant's substance abuse problem. After allowing both sides to comment on his proposed settlement, he spoke clearly and eloquently while explaining his reasonable decision.

Complimented the parents on coming to an agreement regarding custody of their child.

## The Honorable Philip Volland Anchorage Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court November 2002

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	85.1	Arraignment:	9	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	24	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	4
Positive Comments:	23	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	4
Negative Comments:	9	Criminal Trial:	28	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	7	Other Hearings:	18
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>72</b>

---

### Did the judge . . .

(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)

. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.82
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.62
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.56
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.72
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.90
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.78
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.92
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.76
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.76</b>

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### Did the judge appear to favor either side?

Did not favor either side: 72 evaluations.  
Favored the defense: 0 evaluations.  
Favored the prosecution: 0 evaluations.

---

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

Lenient: 0 evaluations.  
Reasonable: 4 evaluations.  
Severe: 0 evaluations.  
Total Sentencings: 4

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Volland:

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The judge was on top of everything in his courtroom at all times. A pleasure to observe this proceeding.

The judge has a cut and dried demeanor and a direct, deliberate way of speaking. He is definitely taking care of the business at hand and doesn't divert his attention to anything else.

The judge clearly explained the mitigators during this sentencing.

Glares and scowls at people in his courtroom.

The judge performs a calm juggling act when handling the in-and-out of custody defendants, victims on the telephone and a half-dozen defense attorneys. His voice is quiet yet easily heard.

Kind and patient in the explanation to a proposed third-party custodian of why she couldn't serve since she was a potential witness in the case.

I am really impressed with the judge's deliberate and efficient pacing of each case. He helped clarify procedures for one defendant whose attorney was not in the courtroom.

Very noisy with crying babies and chatty attorneys.

The judge's consideration of the rules of evidence and the positions of both attorneys was exemplary.

I cannot help but approve of this judge. I commend his knowledge of the law, his personable demeanor, his seriousness when it is warranted and his use of humor when it can smooth the court's business.

The judge firmly and professionally reprimanded attorneys that were not prepared. Great job.

This jury selection was taking many days and the judge said "*...attorneys can wait, witnesses can wait, jurors shouldn't.*" The judge requested the attorneys come with him to advise the remaining potential jurors of the delays and express appreciation for their patience.

Although this courtroom was overflowing with people, the judge kept the courtroom quiet and orderly. Best control of arraignments I have observed.

## The Honorable David Wallace Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Palin to Anchorage District Court January 2009

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	65.9	Arraignment:	7	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	19	Change of Plea:	4	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	42	Civil Trial:	2	Sentencing:	1
Negative Comments:	9	Criminal Trial:	3	Small Claims:	3
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	2	Other Hearings:	28
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>50</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.64
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.36
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.46
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.50
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.55
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.62
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.56
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.42
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.51</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	50 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	1 evaluation.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	1

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Wallace:

---

The judge is helpful, aware, precise and efficient. He carefully clarified his thinking and the law in his sentencing of this defendant.

The judge ignored the activity in the gallery. The municipal prosecutor had to request people to quiet down so she could hear the judge.

I'm not sure defendants would have been able to follow the judge's explanation regarding their change of pleas.

The judge left the bench twice to come down to the gallery – once to welcome a new program participant and then again to hand a note with future hearing dates to another participant during Veterans Court proceedings. He also applauded the six-month sobriety of one defendant and praised him as a role model for others. It was wonderful to watch the judge with these participants.

The judge went through 14 changes of plea. The number of times he patiently explained, in detail, what each defendant was agreeing to amazed me.

The judge does a great job with each participant in Veteran's Court. He had great recollection of each defendant's case.

The judge went the extra mile to explain all the acronyms used during these hearings.

English was not the first language of both parties. The judge took the extra time to explain or rephrase things to make sure everyone understood what was happening. Great job.

Patient and persistent in working with two pro per participants during this civil case.

Did a great job of explaining small claims procedures and the use of free mediators.

The judge noted one defendant had an outstanding warrant and ordered her to remain in the courtroom. When the defendant fled, the judge swiftly ordered the clerk to notify security.

The judge could easily be heard and understood. He made sure all the participants' microphones worked properly.

Kept people from losing their cool during these emotional eviction hearings.

This was my first observation in Veteran's Court. The judge was very positive and personable with each participant.

## The Honorable Pamela Scott Washington Anchorage District Court

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Appointed by Governor Parnell to Anchorage District Court August 2010

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	48.9	Arraignment:	11	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	17	Change of Plea:	4	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	26	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	13	Criminal Trial:	8	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	3	Other Hearings:	12
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>40</b>

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<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.30
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.28
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	2.88
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.25
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.13
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.17
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.29
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.13
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.18</b>

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<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	40 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

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<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Washington:

---

Explained acronyms used during these hearings.

I think some may have thought they could take advantage of this judge as she looks quite young. Not happening.

Finally a judge that notices when defendants are late to watch the video that is shown at the beginning of arraignments.

Patient and firm.

Does not have a "business as usual" attitude.

Enunciation of words needs to improve.

Since she is still quite new to the bench, it would be a good time to get in the habit of speaking much louder.

The judge uses time well in processing the cases before her. She is courteous and professional and uses suggestions from attorneys and the in-court clerk. Great job for a new judge.

This was my first observations at the Anchorage Jail Court. The judge explained the charges and change of pleas details, making sure the defendant understood them. She displayed the same tone and patience throughout.

The judge spoke too softly and has a tendency to mumble to herself when going through files.

I applaud the judge's patience.

The judge noted that a plea agreement failed to meet minimum legal requirements.

The judge has a great voice, speaks clearly and is patient with each defendant.

The judge keeps good eye contact with each defendant as she explains the rights they are forfeiting by entering their changes of plea.

Kudos to the judge for patience in untangling a mess when the attorneys were not ready to proceed with jury selection.

Quickly called a bench conference when the attorneys became argumentative. Good job.

Kept control of argumentative attorneys.

## The Honorable Vanessa White Palmer Superior Court

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Palmer Superior Court November 2006

Evaluations		Case Types			
Evaluation Hours:	28.2	Arraignment:	1	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	8	Change of Plea:	0	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	15	Civil Trial:	6	Sentencing:	1
Negative Comments:	1	Criminal Trial:	7	Small Claims:	0
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	5
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>21</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.57
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.24
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.24
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.38
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.36
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.40
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.53
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.38
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.39</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	21 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	1 evaluation.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	1

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge White:

---

The judge displayed a great deal of concern for the prospective jurors. She listened to their responses during voir dire and evaluated individual requests to be excused.

Apologized and explained why court was starting late.

Totally focused on each case. Understandable explanation of defendant's rights.

The judge was very clear when giving preliminary instructions to the jury. She was pleasant and apologized for an error in jury selection the day before. She took full responsibility and excused a juror.

Extremely considerate to everyone and very focused during closing arguments.

Seemed overly accommodating to the wishes of a defendant.

Motions had been faxed in just prior to this hearing. The judge had the parties come to the courtroom to bring the paperwork in person. Great explanation and firm control.

The judge considered treatment options and thoroughly explained her decisions.

The judge explanations were so easy to understand. She showed a real concern to be sure one of the defendants had access to legal counsel. Great job.

Watched and listened to all participants. Professional, which is nice to see in the Palmer courtroom.

Clear and concise explanations of the procedures.

Gentle and caring but very much in control of her courtroom.

Very good with prospective jurors who may have hardships.

The judge was careful to make sure everyone understood her instructions and explanations.

Attentive and responsive to both pro per parties. Clear instructions on how testimony would be accepted and how parties were to question witnesses. Made sure they understood terms and definitions that came up as the case moved forward. Great job encouraging parents to set aside their personal feeling so they could provide their children with the stability and protection they needed.

**The Honorable John Wolfe**  
**Palmer District Court**

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Appointed by Governor Murkowski to Palmer District Court November 2004

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	28.7	Arrestment:	4	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	8	Change of Plea:	2	Pretrial Conference:	0
Positive Comments:	10	Civil Trial:	0	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	1	Criminal Trial:	7	Small Claims:	1
		Domestic Violence:	0	Trial Call:	0
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	8
		<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>			<b>22</b>

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.27
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.23
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.32
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.18
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.08
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.14
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.15
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.14
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.19</b>

<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	22 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## **Comments**

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Wolfe:

---

Aware of jury's comfort, makes eye contact with attorneys and makes sure microphones are used.

Pleasant and very clear in his decisions. Fair to all defendants.

The judge moved things along efficiently and gave each participant ample time to understand what would be the next step in the legal process.

The judge was very attentive and gave understandable decisions.

Easy to hear and easy to understand his explanations.

Seemed like the public defender was running these hearings.

The judge had to deal with poor notes from a prior judge, ill-prepared district attorney, ill-prepared ASAP office and general confusion, yet he remained calm and in control. Great job.

Attentive to detail.

The judge allowed the participants time to agree to a settlement.

When the judge was asked a question that needed further legal clarification, he stepped out of the courtroom to research the law.

Very easy to follow the decisions and explanations.

## The Honorable Michael Wolverton Anchorage Superior Court

---

Appointed by Governor Knowles to Anchorage Superior Court December 1996  
Appointed by Governor Cowper to Anchorage District Court August 1988

Evaluations	Case Types
Evaluation Hours: 122.8	Arraignment: 3    Pre-indictment Hearing: 0
No. of Observers: 28	Change of Plea: 9    Pretrial Conference: 1
Positive Comments: 33	Civil Trial: 0    Sentencing: 10
Negative Comments: 8	Criminal Trial: 32    Small Claims: 0
	Domestic Violence: 0    Trial Call: 0
	Jury Selection: 9    Other Hearings: 19
	<b>Total Number of Evaluations: 83</b>

Did the judge . . .	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.43
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	3.49
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.30
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.42
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.42
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.29
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.49
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.40
	<b>Overall Rating: 3.40</b>

Did the judge appear to favor either side?	
Did not favor either side:	83 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

During sentencings, the judge was . . .	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	10 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	10

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Wolverton:

---

The judge was very compassionate toward the victim when she became distraught during her testimony.

When the defense attorney kept repeating the same question over and over, the judge firmly moved things along.

In an easy to understand manner, the judge thoroughly went through the rights the defendant would be giving up during this change of plea.

More than once the district attorney turned around to glare at other attorneys that were talking loudly enough to be distracting during closing arguments. The judge didn't seem to hear or notice the noise in the gallery.

Many things were said that I didn't understand during this sentencing. Some were because I couldn't hear the judge and some were because things weren't explained well.

Despite the number of cases, the judge paid attention to each defendant and the facts of each case.

The judge maintains excellent control of his courtroom, admonishing one defendant who was talking during the hearings.

Easy to hear and understand.

This was my first time watching jury selection when potential jurors were called into the courtroom one at a time. Interesting and educational.

Great job explaining his decisions during this sentencing.

While the judge was out of the courtroom, the defendant's family commented that the judge probably had not read any letters that were sent to him regarding the defendant. It was obvious that the judge had read the letters when he made his sentencing remarks and directed some of his comments to parts of those letters. Great job.

Great control of his courtroom. When one defendant shouted out during the hearings, the judge quickly reminded the defendant that he was in court but also reassured him that he would be treated fairly.

With three defendants there would seem to be a potential for confusion but the judge kept control and was very attentive.

This was my first observation in these type of hearings. At times it was difficult to focus on the judge with all that was going on in the gallery.

**The Honorable David Zwink**  
**Palmer District Court**

---

Appointed by Governor Parnell to Palmer District Court January 2010

<b>Evaluations</b>		<b>Case Types</b>			
Evaluation Hours:	29.1	Arraignment:	5	Pre-indictment Hearing:	0
No. of Observers:	8	Change of Plea:	6	Pretrial Conference:	1
Positive Comments:	13	Civil Trial:	1	Sentencing:	0
Negative Comments:	11	Criminal Trial:	2	Small Claims:	1
		Domestic Violence:	6	Trial Call:	1
		Jury Selection:	0	Other Hearings:	4
				<b>Total Number of Evaluations:</b>	<b>27</b>

---

<b>Did the judge . . .</b>	(Each category is rated 1 - 5 by observers.)
. . . pay attention to the proceedings and participants?	3.11
. . . maintain control of the courtroom?	2.85
. . . speak loudly and clearly?	3.07
. . . make remarks that were understood and that made sense?	3.15
. . . show understanding and consideration to the plaintiff/victim (present or not)?	3.10
. . . show understanding and consideration to the defendant (present or not)?	3.12
. . . take time to explain the proceedings to participants?	3.13
. . . treat all participants fairly and impartially?	3.04
<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>3.07</b>

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<b>Did the judge appear to favor either side?</b>	
Did not favor either side:	27 evaluations.
Favored the defense:	0 evaluations.
Favored the prosecution:	0 evaluations.

---

<b>During sentencings, the judge was . . .</b>	
Lenient:	0 evaluations.
Reasonable:	0 evaluations.
Severe:	0 evaluations.
Total Sentencings:	0

## Comments

The following comments are a sampling of those made during observations of Judge Zwink:

---

Much better control of the courtroom than I've previously observed.

Good presentation to the minors in his courtroom who had alcohol-related cases.

Helpful and considerate to the pro per respondent.

Pleasant, patient and I appreciated his subtle sense of humor.

Excellent explanation of defendant's rights.

Cell phones going off, texting going on and children running loose made for a poorly run courtroom.

It was difficult to hear anything with so much chaos in this courtroom.

An interpreter was not available to assist in the arraignments of two defendants that didn't speak English.

Great combination of firmness and consideration shown to each defendant.

Don't judges have a dress code? It appeared the judge wasn't wearing a shirt under his robe. He looked unkempt.

The judge's courtroom was noisy and chaotic during these hearings.

No control of the courtroom. This is not fair to people who take the court system seriously.

Are using the phrases "*your butt is on the line*" and "*you need to rat him out*" appropriate for a judge to say in a courtroom?

This is my third time in arraignments in this judge's courtroom that phones are ringing and people talking in the gallery. It makes it very difficult to hear and certainly diminishes the respect one should have in a courtroom.

The judge handled high emotions with skill and care.

The judge's decision along with an explanation of the statutes and other factors was thoughtful, calm and fair to both parties.

Took the extra time to explain to both parties why the case was not a domestic violence case but rather a custody case that involved OCS, who had a duty to protect the children. The explanation was clear and easy to understand.

The judge has an inherent ability to explain the matter at hand in such a way that it leaves a visual and lasting impression.

## **Acknowledgements**

by  
Kathleen Rice, Executive Director

AJO is a non-profit organization and is supported through hard working and dedicated volunteers. Our court observers spend endless hours in courtrooms, our Board of Directors is active and available in the daily running of our program and our computer expert, Glen Denning, is especially generous in the time he donates to us during the production of our biennial report.

I want to personally thank some people who have helped make our program the success it is today.

Glen Denning is one of a kind. His patience with me while we format and proof the data is never ending. He gives up precious time throughout the year to assist us at a moment's notice. Glen has worked continuously on improving the database to make it easier for a computer novice, like myself, to use. His expertise in computers, people skills and teaching are the sole reasons we are able to translate our evaluations into something that is both easy to understand and professional. The words "thank you" hardly seem worthy to express my appreciation, but I know of no other words to use.

Our courtroom volunteers observe both civil and criminal proceedings in Anchorage, Kenai and Palmer. They give up family and recreational time to attend training sessions, learn the judicial process and attend court. The fact that they take time to actually learn more about how the judicial system works is a real testament to their willingness to want to actually learn how our system works. We also are very proud of the time and work they donate to AJO. Without their dedication we would not exist. This group of volunteers cannot be beat by any other non-profit.

I am very fortunate to have a Board of Directors involved in making our program better every year. Bob Penzenik serves as our president, observes in the courtroom and is very helpful in the office. Chris Lyou is our vice president and continually assists me in anything that I may need. Pat Gallagher serves as the secretary / treasurer, spends time in the courtroom evaluating judges, helps to train volunteers and works in the program office.

Last but not least, I want to give our two volunteer coordinators / office managers my highest praise. Lauren Johansen and Sharisse Stroud have worked so hard and are every executive director's dream employees. Lauren has moved on to law school but still gives her time when she is visiting family in Anchorage. Sharisse joined us this fall and has proven to be a dedicated employee, a friend and a great volunteer trainer

Please know that I am forever grateful to all of you.

## **Alaska Judicial Observers, Inc. Volunteers**

Carol Bellanger	Margy Henderson	Linda McLaughlin
Judy Braun	Glenn Hudson	Janet McVey
Roger Burns	Fabian Janssen	Grace Merkes
Charilyn Cardwell	JJ Janssen	Philip Morrow
Sharon Clawson	Lauren Johansen	Ruth Pallan
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Linda Croft	Vicki Johnston-Freese	Clay Powell
William Croft	Sanda Knight	Carol Razewski
Susan Dabelstein	Sheila Kratzer	Judie Samter
Glen Denning	Judith Larson	Paul Shadura
Gary Durr	Susan Lowe	Ron Stillens
Helen Eichblatt	Chris Lyou	Sharisse Stroud
Daniel Flaherty	Victoria Lyou	Lynn Ward
Lorrie Fuhr	Janet McCullough	Steve Wells
Pat Gallagher	Phyllis McCutcheon	Tracy Williams
Tim Hansen	Tom McCutcheon	Karol Young

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Suzanne Trimble, CPA	Kathleen Rice	Lauren Johansen
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