



MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Payable Traffic Court Fairness Study

**Prepared by:
The Fourth Judicial District Research Division**

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Fourth Judicial District Research Division Staff:

Marcy R. Podkopacz, Ph.D.
Research Director

Deborah A. Eckberg, Ph.D.
Principal Research Associate

Keri Zehm
Research Analyst II

Gina Kubits
Research Analyst I

Payable Traffic Court Fairness Study

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***Hennepin County District Court
Fourth Judicial District Court of Minnesota***

Payable Traffic Court Fairness Report: Executive Summary

Background

- Prior research tells us that satisfaction with the court process has more to do with fair treatment than with favorable case outcomes. In addition, prior research tells us that litigant satisfaction leads to viewing court authority as legitimate, which in turn leads to increased compliance with court orders.
- Defendants appear in Payable Traffic Court after they have met with the hearing officer and were not satisfied with the offer given to them by the hearing officer. While in Payable Traffic Court they are given the same options they received from the Hearing Office and if defendants are still not satisfied with the options they can take the matter to trial. Defendants charged with petty misdemeanors can schedule their trials that day. Those charged with a misdemeanor must first schedule the matter for pre-trial and meet with a city attorney.

Research Design

- Visitors to Payable Traffic Court were interviewed just after their hearings were complete.
- Two hundred and twenty-seven surveys (227) were conducted in Payable Traffic Court. The people surveyed included the defendants from the arraignment calendar and the defendants and police officers from the court trials.

Results of Quantitative Analysis

- Overall, respondents were satisfied with how they were treated by the Payable Traffic Court referee.
- Defendants whose cases were completed were more satisfied with their experiences in Payable Traffic Court than those who had to return to court.
- Defendants who appeared on the arraignment calendar for misdemeanor offenses had more favorable ratings of the court than defendants who appeared for petty misdemeanor offenses.
- Defendants who felt that what was required of them to resolve their cases was appropriate rated the court more positively than those who felt that what was required of them was not appropriate.
- Defendants who came to court for driver's license offenses or insurance offenses were more pleased with their experiences than defendants who were charged with moving violation offenses.

Results of Qualitative Analysis

- Respondents were asked if what was required of them was appropriate for their case and to tell us why they felt that way. The most frequent response was that the experience was a waste of time for them. However, other defendants indicated that they were very satisfied with their experiences.
- When asked to tell us about their experiences in Payable Traffic Court, a majority of respondents indicated that they felt the referee had treated them fairly and that their experiences with this court had been positive.
- When defendants were asked to tell us how we could improve the Payable Traffic Court and the way traffic offenses are handled in Hennepin County, most of them told us that no improvements were needed and had pleasant things to say about their experiences. Those who did have suggestions indicated that they would have liked the process to move more quickly, had complaints about interpreter cases being handled first and complaints about the police.

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Introduction to the Study of Fairness

In March 2003, the Fourth Judicial District embarked upon a study of fairness in the courts. The study was largely based on nationally recognized research by three social psychologists – Larry Heuer (Barnard College, Columbia University), Tom Tyler (New York University), and Steven Penrod (John Jay College of Criminal Justice) – who have spent many years studying the relationship between individuals’ perceptions of fairness and satisfaction, as well as subsequent compliance with the orders of those in authority.

Prior Research

The results of prior studies have shown that while the actual outcome of a case can explain 30-40% of the variance in litigants’ level of satisfaction with the court, perceptions of whether or not litigants feel they have been treated fairly by the court (specifically the judicial officer) can explain 60-70% of the variance. (Tyler, 1984; 1989). In other words, perceptions of fairness are approximately twice as important as case dispositions when it comes to measuring litigant satisfaction with the court. This finding has been labeled “one of the most robust findings in the justice literature” (Brockner et al., 2000). Furthermore, increased justice (procedural fairness) has been shown to be related to increased compliance with court orders, ultimately reducing the rate of “repeat business” for the court and its justice partners (Tyler, 1990).

A number of more recent studies have corroborated the findings of Tyler and his colleagues. Many have found that individuals are satisfied with authority figures if they feel the procedures followed by the authorities have been fair, even if the outcome adversely affects the individual (see Tyler and Smith, 1998, for a review). Another way of saying this is that people are prone to say that even unfavorable outcomes are fair if they have been treated with respect (Skitka and Crosby, 2003). More recent studies, however, are exploring whether procedural justice matters more in some situations than in others (Skitka and Crosby, 2003). It may in fact be, for example, that for certain types of courtroom experiences the procedural fairness piece is less relevant because contact with the judge is minimal. Procedural fairness may also matter more to some types of individuals than others, depending on what groups the individuals identify themselves with (Tyler and Blader, 2003). Regardless, issues of procedural justice and fairness are dynamic, and should be studied with methods that allow for analysis beyond simple correlations.

The Fourth Judicial District of Minnesota: Different Fairness Studies

To measure fairness in the courts, the Research Division of the Fourth Judicial District developed litigant surveys, in conjunction with Heuer, Tyler, and Penrod, to be used in several different areas of the court: Drug Court, the Traffic and Violations Bureau Hearing Office (both in our downtown location and three suburban locations), the Domestic Abuse calendar in Family Court, Delinquency calendars in Juvenile Court, non-felony calendars in our three suburban locations, the Payable Traffic Calendar, the Serious Traffic Calendar, Housing Court, Conciliation Court, and Probate/Mental Health Court. This particular report documents the results of the Payable Traffic Court Study.

Background of Payable Traffic Court Fairness Study

The decision to study Payable Traffic Court came out of a request from the Criminal Division. The study provided the Criminal Division with a “customer satisfaction” survey, as well as an assessment of fairness related to the Payable Traffic Court process.

The Payable Traffic Court Process

Arraignment Calendar. The Minneapolis Payable Traffic Calendar is for parking and traffic offenses that occur in the city of Minneapolis and that can be satisfied by the payment of a fine. The cases typically are put on the calendar for one of three different reasons: (1) the defendant wants to fight his or her ticket and refused to see a Hearing Officer, (2) the defendant has already seen a Hearing Officer but did not agree to what the Hearing Officer offered, or (3) the defendant was arrested (tab charged) for a driving related offense and bailed out of jail. The calendar runs Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings in courtroom 1159 (11th floor), with a District Court Referee presiding. There are no prosecutors or public defenders assigned to appear on the arraignment calendar. The Minneapolis City Attorney has given the court special authority to negotiate settlements with defendants on their behalf. Typical cases include driving without a valid driver’s license or automobile insurance, and moving violations (e.g., speeding, not stopping at a red light). The typical sentence for these types of cases includes a monetary fee or community service. The traditional way these cases are handled is either (1) cases are continued for one year without prosecution, and the defendant has to pay a fee to the Minneapolis City Attorney’s office for this agreement, or (2) defendants who do not qualify for the first option (based on their driving record) would need to plead guilty and pay court fines to avoid going to trial.

Court Trials. If defendants are not satisfied with the options provided during the arraignment hearing, they can schedule a court date and take the matter to trial. If they are charged with a misdemeanor offense, they are required to first schedule a pre-trial date to meet with a prosecutor. If they are charged with a petty misdemeanor, they can schedule a court trial and meeting with the prosecutor is not required. For both misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors, the city attorney has the option to reach an agreement with the defendant before the trial begins. If an agreement is reached, the trial does not occur. If the police officer does not appear at trial, the case is dismissed. If the defendant does not appear, the defendant is found guilty and is required to pay a fine. If both parties have appeared for the court trial, they are sworn in and present their testimony as to what occurred the day of the citation. If the defendant has brought witnesses to the trial, they are also sworn in and present testimony. If the officer has brought evidence of the offense on videotape, the tape is played in the courtroom after his or her testimony. After hearing the testimony from both the defendant and the officer, the referee makes a decision. If she rules in favor of the defendant, the defendant is found not guilty and is not required to pay a fine. If she finds the defendant guilty, the defendant is required to pay a fine and the offense remains on the defendant’s driving record.

The Survey Process

In March and April 2005, the Research Department conducted surveys for both the morning arraignment calendar and the trials in the afternoon. Researchers waited in the courtroom until the hearings were completed and they then followed the respondents out of the courtroom. The defendants (and the police officers for the trial cases) were approached and asked if they would like to complete a brief interview about their experiences in Payable Traffic Court and provide feedback for the courts. The interview took about three minutes.

The first section of the survey consisted of questions regarding fairness. These questions addressed how respondents felt the Payable Traffic Court referee treated court visitors, if they felt the referee had listened to them, and if they were satisfied with the referee's decision. The fairness questions were followed by basic demographic information about the respondents. There were three "open-ended" questions about their experiences and suggestions they had for improvements. Respondents were also asked to tell us in their own words why they felt what was required of them was or was not appropriate for their cases. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide their opinions of the court process and suggestions for improvement (See Appendix A for a complete copy of the survey.)

Two hundred and twenty-seven (227) surveys were conducted in Payable Traffic Court. The survey participants included defendants and police officers. A majority of those we interviewed (90%) appeared on the arraignment calendar, with only 11 defendants from the trial calendar (5%) and 11 police officers (5%) from the trial calendar.

Results of Quantitative Data Analysis

Demographics

As noted above, we surveyed a total of 227 individuals. There were more men in this study 73.6% (167) than women 26.4% (60).

Gender of Respondents (Percentages)

Gender	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
Men	71%	91%	100%
Women	29%	9%	0%

Most of those we interviewed were White (41%) and African American (36%). A smaller percentage of defendants (4%) were East African, Asian (4%), or Native American (1%). The remaining 9% identified themselves as some other racial category. Regardless of race, 6% (14) of the individuals we talked to told us they were of Hispanic descent.

Race of Survey Respondents (Percentages)

Race	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
White	39.0%	45.5%	63.6%
African American	35.6%	45.5%	27.3%
East African	4.4%	0%	9.1%
Native American	1.0%	0%	0%
Asian	4.9%	0%	0%
Other	14.1%	0%	0%

The age of the defendants we interviewed ranged from 18 years to 65 years, with an average of 33 years.

Age of Survey Respondents

	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
Average Age	33.04	34.81	39.91

Nearly one-third of the survey respondents (32%) had completed their college degree while another 29% had completed some college.

Education Level of Survey Respondents (Percentages)

	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
<i>Did not complete high school</i>	11.7%	0%	0%
<i>Earned diploma or GED</i>	29.3%	18.2%	0%
<i>Some Trade school or Finished Trade school</i>	1.5%	0%	0%
<i>Some college</i>	28.8%	45.5%	9.1%
<i>Finished college degree</i>	28.8%	36.4%	90.9%

Most respondents (73%) reported that they were employed. Most of the employed defendants (78%) were employed full-time and the remaining 22% were employed part-time.

Employment Status of Survey Respondents (Percentages)

	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants
Currently employed	76.6%	80.0%
Not employed	22.4%	20.0%

More than one-half of the cases (55%) were moving violation cases. Other case types included driver’s license (22%), insurance (17%), drugs/alcohol (1%), parking (3%), and other (2%) (e.g., vehicle registration, failure to lock ignition).

Court Related Data

Case Type	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants
Driver’s License	23.9%	9.1%
Drugs/Alcohol	1.0%	0%
Moving Violations	52.2%	72.7%
Parking	3.4%	0%
Insurance	17.6%	9.1%
Other	2.0%	9.1%

More than one-half of the cases (56%) were petty misdemeanors and the remaining cases (44%) were misdemeanors.

Offense Level	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants
Petty Misdemeanor	52.7%	81.8%
Misdemeanor	47.3%	18.2%

More than one-third of the respondents (36%) reported that their outcomes resulted in paying a fine. Other outcomes included scheduling a trial date (31%), dismissal (12%), community service (12%), or coming back to resolve the case (7%).

Case Outcome	Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants
Payment	35.6%	72.7%
Community Service	13.2%	0%
Set for trial	24.4%	0%
Set for pre trial	4.4%	0%
Dismissed	12.2%	18.2%
Continued	6.8%	0%

Assessments of Fairness and Customer Satisfaction

The survey included 12 separate indicators of fairness. (See Appendix A for a copy of the survey.) Many of these questions are the same fairness questions that we have asked in other courts (e.g., Family Court, Juvenile Court, and Criminal Courts). Survey respondents were asked to rate their levels of agreement with each of the 12 statements on a nine point scale, where a 1 indicated strong disagreement, a 9 indicated strong agreement, and a rating of 5 indicated a neutral/no opinion rating. Visitors were encouraged to choose any number on the scale from 1 to 9 (i.e., not simply 1 or 9). If litigants responded to the statements with a comment such as “yes” or “I agree,” research staff reminded them that they needed to choose a number between 1 and 9.¹

Univariate Analysis

Before conducting bivariate analyses (i.e., did individuals of one group give higher or lower fairness ratings than individuals of another group?), we ran simple univariate analyses to get a sense of how the referee was rated by people who met with her during this time frame.

Perhaps the most undisputable outcome of the entire study is that individuals gave mostly positive ratings to the behavior of the referee. This was especially true for those on the arraignment calendar and the police officers. The fact that court trial defendants gave the referee relatively lower ratings makes intuitive sense, as most people who proceed to court trials are found guilty. In addition, those who had trials had to make three trips to the Government Center so they may also have been upset about how much time they spent to resolve their cases. However, according to procedural justice theory, trial defendants should not have differed from those on the arraignment calendar on the survey items related to fairness.

Some examples are provided below:

<i>Survey Statement</i>	<i>Arraignment</i>	<i>Court Trial Defendant</i>	<i>Court Trial Police Officers</i>
<i>The judicial officer treated me fairly.</i>	8.32	6.18	8.27
<i>The judicial officer listened to what I (or my lawyer) had to say.</i>	8.20	6.36	8.18
<i>I am satisfied with the judicial officer's decision</i>	7.44	6.10	7.50
<i>The outcome of my (the) case was fair.</i>	7.46	6.88	7.70
<i>I will try to follow the judicial officer's order in this case.</i>	8.56	8.38	N/A

Bivariate Analysis

The 12 statements were combined into the following four categories. (See Appendix D for a complete list of all the indicators that formed each category.) We analyzed the differences between groups for all four categories. The remaining analyses were conducted only with

¹ Averages (i.e., means) and standard deviations for each individual indicator are presented in Appendix B.

individuals from the arraignment calendar since a majority of cases in Payable Traffic Court are handled on this calendar. However, if we include defendants from the trial calendar, the findings are the same. The graphs indicate the means for each group we are comparing and the four categories were given the following labels:

1. **Procedural Justice** or the extent to which the survey respondents felt the referee treated them fairly during their hearing.
2. **Outcome** or the extent to which the survey respondents felt the outcomes of their cases were fair and deserved.
3. **Compliance** or the extent to which the survey respondents indicated that they understood the referee's orders and intended to follow the orders.
4. **Satisfaction** or the extent to which respondents were satisfied with the referee's decisions.

Average Fairness Ratings based on education

Although all the fairness scale scores were positive, there were significant differences based on education. Individuals who had a high school diploma or had not completed high school were more likely than individuals who had started or completed college to feel the referee treated them fairly, to report they would comply with the referee's decision, and to be more satisfied with the referee's decision.

Average scores for each scale (on a scale of 1-9):

Procedural Justice Scales by level of Education

	High school or less	More than high school	significance
Fairness	8.23	7.94	*
Outcome	7.37	6.69	ns
Compliance	8.75	8.46	*
Satisfaction	7.92	7.04	**

Significance levels: ns=not significant * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Defendants who came to court for a petty misdemeanor offense were less satisfied than individuals who were charged with a misdemeanor offense across all measures of fairness.

Procedural Justice Scales by Case Type

	Petty Misdemeanor	Misdemeanor	significance
Fairness	7.90	8.40	***
Outcome	6.35	7.80	***
Compliance	8.42	8.78	**
Satisfaction	6.70	8.24	**

Significance levels: ns=not significant * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Defendants were asked if they felt what was required of them was appropriate for their case. Respondents who said “yes,” had more favorable ratings of the court than those who said “no.”

Procedural Justice Scales by whether or not Defendants Felt the Outcome Was Appropriate for Their Case

	Yes	No	significance
Fairness	8.40	6.75	***
Outcome	7.58	4.48	***
Compliance	8.68	8.13	*
Satisfaction	8.12	4.67	***

Significance levels: ns=not significant * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Individuals who did not have to come back to court after their case was handled on the arraignment calendar were more satisfied with the outcome of their case and were more satisfied with the decision compared to defendants who had to come back a second time to resolve their case.

Procedural Justice Scales based on Defendants' Cases Being Completed

	Case completed	Case not completed	significance
Fairness	8.13	7.90	ns
Outcome	7.34	6.14	***
Compliance	8.61	8.53	ns
Satisfaction	7.74	6.68	**

Significance levels: ns=not significant * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

People who came to court for insurance matters were more likely than those with moving violations to feel that they were treated fairly. Defendants who were charged with driver's license offenses or insurance offenses were more satisfied with the outcomes of their cases and more satisfied with the referee's decision compared to those who were charged with moving violations.

Procedural Justice Scales based on case type

	Driver's license	Moving Violation	Insurance	significance
Fairness	8.26	7.87	8.66	**
Outcome	7.80	6.37	7.86	***
Compliance	8.77	8.45	8.75	ns
Satisfaction	8.25	6.75	8.26	***

Significance levels: ns=not significant * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Additional Analyses

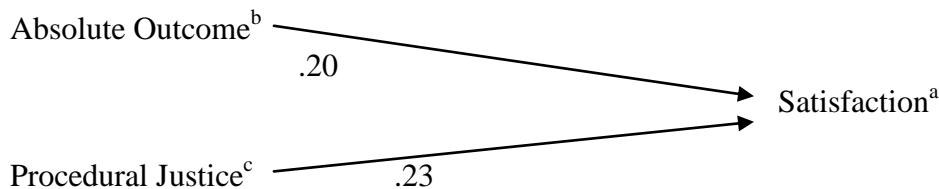
In the previous section, we only reported on the independent variables that have a statistical relationship with the fairness constructs. We ran additional analyses which did not produce statistically significant results. For example, many demographic variables such as age, gender, employment status, and race were not related to perceptions of fairness.

Multivariate Analysis

Factors leading to Customer Satisfaction in Payable Court

To test the procedural fairness premise (how people are treated is a stronger predictor of satisfaction with the court process than their case outcomes) additional analyses were conducted. Using multiple regression analysis we tested this premise by entering the outcome indicator first (the outcome was favorable), and then looking at the improvement in explanatory power of litigant's satisfaction when we added the questions related to procedural fairness (treated fairly, listened to and understood the order). This type of analysis allows us to break apart the contributions to a variable and identify what percent of the whole is related to one independent indicator versus another independent indicator.

For Payable Traffic Court, we are trying to explain satisfaction with the judicial officer's decision by looking at whether a favorable outcome was more or less important than procedural justice. The table below shows that having a favorable outcome is related to higher satisfaction and accounts for approximately 20% of the explanatory power. When we add the seven questions that are related to procedural justice; we see that the explanatory power has increased to 43%. This means that 23% of the satisfaction defendants feel about the court's decision in Payable Traffic Court can be explained by knowing how people perceive they were treated with regard to fairness, being listened to and understanding the court orders. This model is highly significant and does a good job of explaining satisfaction with Payable Traffic Court.



^a Scale of 1-9 where the higher the number the more agreement with to the following statement:
I am satisfied with the judicial officer's decision.

^b Scale of 1-9 scale where the higher the number the more agreement to the following statement:
The outcome I received was worse than I deserved (reverse coded).

^c All seven indicators on a 1-9 scale where the higher the number the more agreement to the following statements:
The judicial officer gave reasons for his or her decision.
The judicial officer made sure I understood the decision.
The judicial officer seemed to be a caring person.
The judicial officer treated me with respect.
The judicial officer listened carefully to what I (or my lawyer) had to say in this case.
The judicial officer treated me fairly.

Summary of Quantitative Analysis

Defendants in Payable Traffic Court reported very high levels of satisfaction, fairness, and felt that they were listened to when they were in court. There were no differences between defendants according to age, gender, employment status, or race. Defendants whose cases were completed that day were more satisfied than those who had to return to court with the court process. Also, those who were charged with misdemeanor offenses had more favorable ratings of the court than defendants who were charged with petty misdemeanor offenses. Defendants who felt what was required of them was appropriate compared to those who did not rated the court more positively. Individuals who came to court for driver's license or insurance offenses were more pleased with their experiences than were defendants who were charged with moving violations.

Results of Qualitative Analysis

Defendants were asked to tell us their opinion of whether or not what was required of them was appropriate for their cases. At the end of the survey, we included three questions which allowed respondents, in their own words, to tell us about their experiences in Payable Traffic Court. This section of the report summarizes those results. Participants had multiple responses; therefore, the categories are not mutually exclusive. Appendix E includes all open-ended responses.

The first open-ended question read as follows:

Do you feel that what is required of you is appropriate for your case?

The top three responses to this question were:

“Waste of time” (27%)

Positive Comments (16%) (Such as, “It was perfect.”)

Negative Comments (16%) (Such as, “Rates go up too much for minor traffic violation.”)

The second question read as follows:

Say you had a friend who was coming to court before this judicial officer what would you tell your friend about this judge?

The top three responses to this question were:

“Judge was fair” (32%)

“Judge was nice” (21%)

“Judge did a good job” (13%)

The third question read as follows:

Is there anything you think we can do to improve this court?

The three most common response categories to this question were:

“No improvements needed” (14%)
Positive comments (13%) (Such as, “It was fantastic.”)
Interpreter issues (6%) (Such as, “Give interpreters a separate courtroom.”)

The fourth and final open-ended question read as follows:

Is there anything you think we can do to improve the way traffic offenses are handled through Hennepin County courts?

The three most common response categories to this question were:

“No improvements needed” (36%)
Complaints about the police (10%) (Such as, “The cops give out bogus tickets.”)
“I don’t know” (9%)

Summary of Qualitative Analysis

Survey respondents provided much positive feedback about their experience in Payable Traffic Court. Many visitors had positive comments about the referee and reported they felt the referee listened to them and was respectful. Defendants were asked to tell us whether or not they felt what was required of them was appropriate for their cases. Many defendants reported the experience was a waste of time and others found the experience to be positive. When asked what the courts could do to improve the Payable Traffic Court, many court visitors reported that no improvements were needed and had a lot of positive things to say about their experiences. The most frequent suggestion was that interpreter cases should not be handled first. Court visitors felt it was unfair that people with interpreters went first and did not have to adhere to the number system (defendants received a number when they arrived in court and defendants appeared before the judge based on that number).

Overall Conclusions and Report Summary

Overall, defendants were satisfied with their experiences in Payable Traffic Court and the treatment they received from the referee. This was demonstrated by the high agreement on all of the statements pertaining to fairness, satisfaction with the outcomes, and willingness to comply with the referee’s decision. There were no differences between defendants according to age, gender, employment status, or race. Defendants whose cases were completed that day were more satisfied with the process than were those who had to return to court to complete their cases. Also, those who were charged with misdemeanor offenses had more favorable ratings of the court than defendants who were charged with petty misdemeanor offenses. Defendants who felt that what was required of them was appropriate rated the court more positively than those who did not. Individuals who came to court for driver’s license or insurance offenses were more pleased with their experiences than defendants who were charged with moving violations.

The majority of open-ended responses were overwhelmingly positive. Defendants who felt that what was required of them was not appropriate, said the experience was a waste of time. However, others felt that what was required of them was appropriate and that their experiences were positive. Many visitors to Payable Traffic Court reported that they felt the referee was fair, nice, and did a good job.

Appendix A: Payable Traffic Court Survey (on the following pages)

Appendix B: The Averages of Visitors' Responses to the Survey Items

Visitors were read the following statements and indicated their agreement or disagreement with each statement by providing the interviewer with a number ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), with the mid-point being 5 (neutral). Below are the statements, followed by the means, and standard deviations based on whether they appeared on the arraignment calendar or the trial calendar as a defendant or a police officer.

The judicial officer gave reasons for his or her decision.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.43 (2.12)	5.90 (3.45)	8.00 (2.41)

The judicial officer made sure I understood the decision.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.17 (1.41)	6.00 (2.97)	8.36 (1.29)

The judicial officer seemed to be a caring person.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.18 (1.56)	6.00 (3.38)	7.82 (2.44)

The judicial officer treated me with respect.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.58 (1.06)	7.36 (2.54)	8.09 (2.39)

The judicial officer listened carefully to what I (or my lawyer) had to say.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.20 (1.59)	6.36 (3.47)	8.18 (1.60)

The judicial officer treated me fairly.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.32 (1.46)	6.18 (3.54)	8.27 (1.35)

The outcome I received was worse than I deserved.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
6.59 (2.93)	6.10 (3.48)	N/A

My case was completed in a timely fashion.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.04 (2.75)	4.33 (3.35)	6.18 (3.31)

I am satisfied with the judicial officer's decision.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.44 (2.39)	6.10 (3.73)	7.50 (3.17)

The outcome of my case was fair.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.46 (2.42)	6.88 (2.95)	7.70 (2.83)

I will try to follow the judicial officer's order in this case.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.56 (1.18)	8.38 (1.41)	N/A

I understand what is required of me in order to comply with the judicial officer's decision.

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.61 (1.06)	8.14 (1.57)	N/A

Appendix C: List of Indicators for Each Construct

Procedural Justice

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.14 (1.21)	6.30 (2.71)	8.12 (1.77)

- The judge gave reasons for his or her decision.
- The judge made sure everyone understood the decision.
- The judge seemed to be a caring person.
- The treated me with respect.
- The judicial officer listened carefully to what I (or my lawyer) had to say in this case.
- The judicial officer treated me fairly.

Satisfaction

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.44 (2.39)	6.10 (3.73)	7.50 (3.17)

- I am satisfied with the judicial officer's decision

Outcome

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
7.03 (2.12)	5.33 (2.50)	7.03 (2.72)

- The outcome I received was worse than I deserved (reverse coded).
- My case was completed in a timely fashion.
- The outcome of my case was fair.

Compliance

Arraignments	Court Trial Defendants	Court Trial Police Officers
8.59 (1.00)	8.31 (1.28)	N/A

- I will try to follow judicial officer's order in this case.
 - I understand what is required of me in order to comply with the judicial officer's decision.

Appendix D: Frequencies of the Open-Ended Responses

Do you feel that what is required of you is appropriate for your case?

Top three comments:

Waste of time (17)

“Too much time wasted.” “Too many steps.”

Positive experience (10)

“It was perfect.” “Wonderful.”

Negative experience (10)

“Rates go up too much for minor traffic violation.” “Seems a little much.”

Complaint about police (8)

“The ticket wasn’t appropriate.” “The officer was not fair in this circumstance.”

Did not get a good deal (6)

“Too high of a fine.” “Wanted both off record.”

Should have listened to my situation/case more (5)

“Expecting to be able to discuss a specific circumstance which could have made it not guilty.”

“Not my van, just borrow it and it (marijuana) came out from under the seat.”

Judge was nice (4)

“She was nice.” “She was a nice lady.”

Ridiculous (3)

“Ridiculous.” “Ridiculous the way people are treated with WI plates.”

Charges were mistake (3)

“I think my ticket is unfair.” “I owe nothing because I paid the meter.”

Hearing Office/Officer negative (3)

“Hearing Officer was intimidating me.” “Hearing Officers like X are crappy.”

Judge was helpful (2)

“Very helpful.” “She was helpful.”

Judge positive (2)

“She was cool.” “Appreciate judge’s decision.”

Prosecutor comments (2)

“Should be a prosecutor to talk to.” “Too many steps before you even get to talk to a prosecutor.”

Other (9)

“Don’t really have choice.” “A DAR- very lucky.”

Say you had a friend who was coming to court before this judicial officer, what would you tell your friend about this judge?

Top three comments:

Judge was fair (75)

“That she’s fair.” “She’s a fair judge.”

Nice demeanor (49)

“She was nice.” “She’s real nice.”

Good judge/good job (32)

“Did a good job.” “She’s really good.”

Pleasant demeanor (21)

“Friendly.” “Courteous.”

Judge is considerate (17)

“She’s understanding.” “Caring person.”

Judge listens to people (12)

“She will listen.” “Willing to listen.”

Positive experience (10)

“Get em this judge by all means.” “Reduced it a whole lot.”

No/nothing (10)

“Nothing really.” “Not a word.”

I don’t know (9)

“Too little info I have.” “Not sure.”

Judge explained my options (7)

“Took time to explain things.” “She explains both sides- if I go to trial or not.”

Be honest (6)

“Be as honest as possible.” “Be honest.”

Negative experience (6)

“Can’t do anything for you.” “If you’re the defendant you’ll probably lose.”

Easy to understand judge/process (5)

“Very understandable.” “Straightforward.”

Judge is reasonable (5)

“Reasonable.” “Willing to agree.”

Judge is professional (5)

“Very professional.”

Excellent judge (5)

“Excellent judge.” “Wonderful person.”

Better than it used to be/better than I am used to (5)

“One of the better judge.” “One of the better courtroom experiences I’ve had.”

Efficient process (4)

“Efficient.” “Very efficient.”

Be calm (4)

“Don’t be nervous.” “Be calm.”

Neutral experience (4)

“She’s all right.” “Everything was ok.”

Quick process (3)

“Quick.”

Patient judge (3)

“Patient.” “Very patient.”

Time issues/wait time (3)

“Wait patiently.” “Leave a lot of time.”

Judge is knowledgeable (2)

“Knowledgeable.” “Seemed knowledgeable.”

Makes good decisions (2)

“Judge listens to testimony and makes decision.” “Concise decisions.”

Other (16)

“You’re going to judge- anything is possible.” “First time here.”

Is there anything you think we can do to improve this court?

Top three comments:

No improvements needed (34)

“No.” “Nothing.”

Positive comments (30)

“Was fantastic.”

Interpreter issues (14)

“People with interpreters don’t have to take a number.” “Give interpreters a separate courtroom.”

Speed up the process (13)

“Speed it up.”

Make information about the process more clear (9)

“Make the numbers more clear.” “Went to Hearing Office, didn’t know I was supposed to be here.”

Negative comments about the number system (8)

“Number system doesn’t work.”

Neutral comments (8)

“It was okay.”

Improvements to the courtroom (5)

“Get microphone for judge—cannot hear her.” “Get a T.V. in there.”

Make more options available (5)

“Change the rules--if you’ve had ticket in last year that you can still have it off your record.”

Weapons screening comments (5)

“Open another line for weapons screening.”

Schedule a time to come to court (5)

“Schedule times for everyone.”

Positive comments about the judge (4)

“Send everyone to [this judge].”

Negative comments about the police (4)

“Just the officer that wrote up the ticket.”

Negative comments about the defendant (3)

“Hold defendants to their scheduled arrival time and hold them responsible when late.”

Judge should listen more (3)

“Have more judges that listen.”

Hearing office issues (3)

“Just the hearing officer [needs improvement].” “Have more hearing officers.”

Negative comments (3)

“Less confusing--went to court before, told me different things than today.”

Don’t give me a ticket (3)

“Quit picking us up.”

Prosecutor issues (3)

“Get the prosecutor so they can be disposed in a timely manner.” “Have prosecutor available at first hearing.”

Other (10)

“Courtroom is a little lax, needs more respect for court and judges, more “your honors” are important.”

Is there anything you think we can do to improve the way traffic offenses are handled in Hennepin County?

Top three comments:

No improvements needed (34)

“No.” “Nope.”

Complaints about the police (19)

“I should not have been pulled over.” “Get better cops.”

I don’t know (18)

“I don’t know.”

It was fine (13)

“I think it is fine.” “Proceedings were fine.”

Negative comments about the judge/process (3)

“The judge should listen more.”

The court has improved (3)

“Used to be worse—it has improved.”

Positive comments about the judge/process (11)

“She was pretty cool.” “Works pretty well.”

It’s was a good experience (8)

“My experience has been good.”

It was fair (6)

“It’s fair.” “Judge was fair.”

Issues with the city attorney (4)

“The way City Attorney handles pretrial, it does shorten wait time somewhat.”

Too many steps/big hassle (8)

“Two-step process, not three, Hearing Office visit was a waste of time.” “Length of things people have to do.”

Give the Hearing Officer/Judicial Officer more authority (6)

“Give judge discretion to make offer, I made an offer and she couldn’t take it.” “Talk to Hearing Office and have them be able to resolve cases.”

Speed up the process (6)

“More faster, I think I got a parking ticket now.”

Other (34)

“It is too easy going compared to Dakota County.” “Fix weapon screening.” “Handle over phone or mail.” “Take people by last name instead of number.”

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