

2017-2018 Judicial Poll Results

CFACDL strives to provide the citizenry of Central Florida with valuable information regarding local judicial officers. As is our annual practice, in the spring of 2018 our organization composed a list of all judges in Central Florida who handled criminal cases within the previous 12 months. We then composed a questionnaire covering six different performance areas:

DEMEANOR: Demonstrating courtesy, patience, tolerance, and self-control.

DILIGENCE: Exhibiting promptness and efficiency. This will specifically include whether the judge's procedures minimize the waste of time of counsel, accused, and witnesses.

FREEDOM FROM BIAS: Exhibiting no bias for or against counsel, litigants, or witnesses by reason of race, religion, gender, age, and/or national origin.

IMPARTIALITY: Showing no favoritism for or against either the state or the accused.

LEGAL KNOWLEDGE: Possessing a foundation in procedural and substantive law as well as an ability to expeditiously comprehend and analyze legal issues.

OVERALL RATING: Overall view of the judge's legal ability, judicial ability, and fundamental fairness. Does not need to be the average of the first five categories.

We sent the questionnaire to local private attorneys, public defenders, regional conflict counsel, and prosecutors. Responses were collected anonymously, and are in the form of a numerical scale from 1 to 10 (with a response of 1 meaning "Very Poor," 2 meaning "Poor," 3 meaning "Well Below Average," 4 meaning "Below Average," 5 meaning "Average," 6 meaning "Above Average," 7 meaning "Well Above Average," 8 meaning "Good," 9 meaning "Very Good," and 10 meaning "Excellent."), as well as anonymous comments regarding each of the six performance areas. Any comments which in the view of the board violate Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct are deleted from publication. The remaining responses are published here without any modifications, grammar/spelling corrections, or editing of any kind by the board.

CFACDL 2017-2018 JUDICIAL POLL RESULTS

Poll Respondents

Private Defense Counsel	49
Public Defender	71
Regional Conflict Counsel	1
<u>Prosecutor</u>	<u>40</u>
Total	161

Federal District and Magistrate Judges – Numerical Results

	<u>Demeanor</u>	<u>Diligence</u>	<u>Freedom from Bias</u>	<u>Impartiality</u>	<u>Legal Knowledge</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Hon. John Antoon II	8.62	8.58	8.67	8.33	8.64	8.45
Hon. Paul G. Byron	7.85	8.23	7.92	6.69	7.45	6.92
Hon. Anne C. Conway	7.00	7.55	7.27	7.09	7.64	7.27
Hon. Roy B. Dalton, Jr.	8.23	8.46	8.36	8.31	8.27	8.25
Hon. Carlos E. Mendoza	6.54	7.69	6.58	5.42	6.27	6.00
Hon. Gregory A. Presnell,	8.27	8.36	8.45	8.09	8.33	7.55
Hon. G. Kendall Sharp	5.50	6.36	5.42	5.83	5.64	5.64
Hon. Daniel C. Irick	6.82	7.30	7.00	6.20	7.22	6.30
Hon. Gregory J. Kelly	8.27	8.42	8.25	7.67	7.90	7.64
Hon. Thomas B. Smith	7.50	8.07	8.07	8.15	8.00	7.77
Hon. Karla R. Spaulding	7.36	8.38	8.00	7.71	8.17	8.00

Federal District and Magistrate Judges – Comments

Hon. John Antoon, II:

Demeanor –

Excellent judge. very prepared, very thoughtful. does an individualized sentencing

Diligence –

Most diligent I have ever appeared before

Hon. Paul G. Byron:

Freedom from Bias –

Some time it appears that he still thinks he is an AUSA

Hon. Anne C. Conway:

Demeanor –

Excellent demeanor. very patient and courteous.

Hon. Roy B. Dalton, Jr.:

Demeanor –

A lawyer's judge. Respects the lawyer's time, but rightfully expects lawyers to respect the time of court personnel

Hon. Carlos E. Mendoza:

Demeanor –

Good demeanor. very fair towards counsel and litigants

Hon. Gregory A. Presnell:

Demeanor –

Excellent judge. Courteous, impartial. Let's the lawyers try their cases. Very thoughtful in listening to arguments of counsel.

Hon. G. Kendall Sharp:

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Daniel C. Irick:

Demeanor –

New judge, but works hard to being patient and courteous to the litigants and their counsel

Hon. Gregory J. Kelly:

Demeanor –

Good judge and one who is courteous and respectful of everyone's time

Hon. Thomas B. Smith:

Demeanor –

Excellent judge who will always listen to arguments, takes notes and is fair to all parties

Hon. Karla R. Spaulding:

Demeanor –

Very fair. Always holds both sides to the highest professional standards

Ninth Circuit - Circuit Court Judges - Numerical Results

	<u>Demeanor</u>	<u>Diligence</u>	<u>Freedom from Bias</u>	<u>Impartiality</u>	<u>Legal Knowledge</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Hon. Frederick J. Lauten	8.75	8.64	8.71	8.43	8.64	8.78
Hon. Gail A. Adams	8.15	8.04	8.16	8.04	7.40	7.89
Hon. Alan S. Apte	5.55	5.74	6.66	6.56	7.52	6.42
Hon. Elaine A. Barbour	7.09	6.29	7.97	6.90	6.60	6.42
Hon. Mark S. Blechman	8.11	8.29	7.93	7.69	8.37	7.88
Hon. Luis F. Calderon	8.44	7.93	8.83	8.50	7.96	8.28
Hon. Keith A. Carsten	8.33	7.81	7.93	7.55	7.53	7.77
Hon. A. James Craner	6.78	6.84	6.93	6.23	6.64	6.70
Hon. Daniel P. Dawson	6.56	5.12	7.00	5.87	6.27	5.78
Hon. Robert J. Egan	8.92	8.29	8.88	8.45	8.29	8.51
Hon. John Marshall Kest	6.89	7.24	6.13	5.51	6.56	5.87
Hon. Sally D. M. Kest	3.35	3.53	3.84	3.13	3.67	3.11
Hon. Alicia L. Latimore	6.08	5.38	6.44	6.09	5.44	5.82
Hon. Marc L. Lubet	7.22	6.54	7.59	7.24	7.83	7.58
Hon. Leticia Marquez	8.37	8.28	8.61	8.48	8.38	8.41
Hon. Jon B. Morgan	8.54	8.58	8.89	8.31	8.61	8.77
Hon. Lisa T. Munyon	6.94	7.60	7.15	6.73	7.33	7.19
Hon. Renee A. Roche	6.28	6.77	7.21	7.03	6.83	6.62
Hon. Tim Shea	6.54	7.30	7.95	7.07	7.14	7.00
Hon. Kim Shepard	2.81	2.52	3.60	2.93	2.33	2.14
Hon. Dianna M. Tennis	7.40	7.46	7.88	8.00	7.76	8.00
Hon. Dan Traver	8.60	8.69	8.68	8.42	8.19	8.75
Hon. Greg A. Tynan	6.64	7.66	6.93	5.74	7.05	6.63
Hon. Reginald K. Whitehead	9.21	8.63	9.26	9.04	8.67	8.85
Hon. Tanya Davis Wilson	8.28	8.08	8.59	7.93	7.70	8.11

Ninth Circuit - Circuit Court Judges – Comments

Hon. Frederick J. Lauten:

Demeanor –

He is personable, professional, excellent speaker, and just an all around great judge. I was very pleased to hear when he was chosen as the new Chief Judge.

In my opinion, Judge Lauten is the model for courtesy, patience, and tolerance.

Judge Lauten is always a pleasure to appear in front of, he is courteous to all.

It is a pleasure to practice in front of Chief Lauten.

Judge Lauten is courteous to everyone in the courtroom, even when people are being difficult.

Judge Lauten consistently treats all parties with patience and courtesy.

Diligence –

Despite what must be a very busy schedule as Chief Judge, the Chief will provide a thoughtful ruling in due time.

Freedom from Bias –

I believe that Judge Lauten treats everyone equally and fair.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Lauten has exemplified his impartiality his entire legal career, in my opinion.

As a public defender, I feel like the Chief treats state and defense with equal respect.

Legal Knowledge –

I believe Judge Lauten is excellent with his legal analysis, especially with complicated issues.

Judge Lauten appears well-versed in the law and receptive to learning that which he does not know.

Overall –

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Judge Lauten is one of my favorite Judges and I wish he was still the trial Judge.

Hon. Gail A. Adams:

Demeanor –

Judge Adams is very respectful to all who appear before her.

Judge Adams is respectful of everyone in the courtroom.

It is my opinion that Judge Gail A. Adams is courteous to everyone in her courtroom, but that she does seem to get aggravated with repeat people in her courtroom.

Diligence –

Judge Adams is very fair regarding plea conferencing and keeps cases moving efficiently.

In my opinion Judge Gail Adams is one of the most efficient and prompt.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Adams seems to treat everyone in the courtroom the same and tries to be neutral in her proceedings.

Impartiality –

In my opinion Judge Adams is neutral but also reasonable.

Judge Adams seems to treat everyone in the courtroom the same and tries to be neutral in her proceedings.

Legal Knowledge –

It is my opinion that Hon. Gail A. Adams understands the law and how to properly administer it.

Overall –

Judge Adams is a pleasure to be in front of!

Hon. Alan S. Apte:

Demeanor –

Judge Apte often appears to lack patience and seems to quickly lose his temper. It feels like you never know what kind of mood he will be in when taking the bench.

Appearing in front of Judge Apte can often feel like an emotional rollercoaster; one day he may seem pleasant, respectful and professional; other days, he seems angry, impatient and belligerent.

My interactions with Judge Apte have always been positive. However, I have seen him express frustration at other attorneys in the courtroom that seems unwarranted. I think we should all strive for consistency.

Judge Apte is not a patient man.

Judge Apte can be incredibly nice and courteous. He can also be impatient and cut down attorneys at times.

Judge Apte is the toughest call on demeanor in my book, if you're prepared and ready to go when he is, then he's great, but in my opinion if something comes up where you cannot be (State sends an offer at 8pm the night before the hearing, etc) then it is usually tough to get through.

Diligence –

Judge Apte appears to be inconsistent with the time he takes the bench.

Judge Apte seems to enjoy lecturing anyone in the courtroom, wasting a lot of time.

Works hard to get written rulings out.

Judge Apte calls cases alphabetically on the docket, without regard to whether there are other cases that are ready to proceed. The result is an attorney can wait for hours on end for their case to be called, even if it is something that should be quick and easy to address. Perhaps Judge Apte has good intentions but it appears to make court last unnecessarily long and does not minimize waste of time but contributes to it.

Judge Apte's courtroom procedure tends to decrease rather than increase efficiency. Specifically the reliance on alphabetic docket sounding rather than taking parties who are ready has the effect, however inadvertently, of delaying quick matters based solely on the alphabetic position of the party.

It is clear when you walk in that you are entering Judge Apte's courtroom. Sometimes you get called up in a timely manner, and sometimes you sit there for 3 hours ready to go and miss office conferences/meetings/etc.

In my opinion, the docket in Judge Apte's courtroom moves SO SLOWLY. You can easily be there for hours for what should be a 30 second hearing.

Appears to engage in useless banter.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

Sometimes, it appears that Judge Apte may be equally biased against both parties.

Judge Apte is a fair judge who exhibits no particular bias against litigants before him.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

Judge Apte appears to disfavor indigent defendants. It can be uncomfortable to watch while waiting for a case to be addressed in his courtroom.

Judge Apte, I feel, does not favor the state or the defense. However, his general relative lack of bias can be unpredictable.

Judge Apte is an equal opportunity Judge. He will call out either side for mistakes made or laziness.

Judge Apte appears exceptionally fair to all litigants before him, regardless of which side they serve.

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[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

While Judge Apte appears to possess a great deal of legal knowledge, he does not exhibit expediency in applying that knowledge to his legal rulings.

In my opinion, Judge Apte studies the law more than anyone else in Orange County and enjoys sharing his knowledge with attorneys.

Judge Apte appears to be one of the most astute and well-learned jurists in the jurisdiction. His legal knowledge is quite impressive.

Judge Apte's knowledge of evidence and caselaw and procedure is almost unrivaled. I am usually very happy when to be in front of him when the law is on my side.

Overall –

Judge Apte is one of the best Judges in the Ninth Judicial Circuit and I hope he become the Chief Judge someday.

Hon. Elaine A. Barbour:

Demeanor –

In my opinion, Judge Barbour allows attorneys to make arguments without interrupting and she treats attorneys and criminal defendants with respect.

Judge Barbour does generally allow all sides to be heard before speaking. She does allow great latitude with difficult defendants and never screams at them. Even if bothered by a litigant attorney, she does not yell. Rarely get an unkind word in court.

Judge Barbour is a patient person, I think that her time as a juvenile judge has helped give her patience to deal with adult clients as well

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

While patient Judge Barbour does not start court promptly most times and this sometimes results in extended delays in the handling of cases in terms of efficiency

Freedom from Bias –

I have never seen Judge Barbour take this into account.

Impartiality –

Judge Barbour seems to be very lenient on the accused. She is way too focused on rehabilitation, rather than punishment; often times at the expense of victims and the community.

Judge Barbour appears to show favoritism towards the State.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

a welcome addition to the Circuit Bench.

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[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Mark S. Blechman:

Demeanor –

I had the pleasure of practicing in front of Judge Blechman and very much enjoyed that experience. He is personable and professional and followed the law to a T.

In my opinion, Judge Blechman was just as much of a mentor as he was a great judge. He was always fair and courteous to both sides.

In my opinion, Judge Bleckman has a wonderful demeanor on and off the bench.

Judge Blechman is very cordial and professional to everyone in his courtroom.

Judge Blechman has a disdain for theft cases in particular, his use of the word "thief" (for example, during a plea stating to a defendant "I now adjudicate you guilty of being a thief") are not courteous and appear to lack self-control. All defendant's who appear before the Court, regardless of any poor decision they have made, deserve a dignified process and to not be humiliated by the Court they stand before.

Diligence –

Judge Blechman is extremely prompt and efficient

Judge Blechman seems very conscientious of attorneys' time.

Judge Blechman presides over a very well-run courtroom.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Blechman appears to have a bias against defendants of property crimes

Judge Blechman appears to exhibit bias against defendants in criminal cases at times. Especially those defendants charged with theft or fraud related charges.

I believe that Judge Blechman is fair and treats people equally.

Judge Blechman appears to be bias towards lower income clients and their attorneys at times.

Judge Blechman appears unbiased against any party based on race, religion, gender, age, or national origin. He does appear biased against certain types of offenses or litigants based upon the charges against them (thefts, in particular).

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I believe that Judge Blechman is impartial and neutral.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Blechman appears to show favoritism toward the State.

Judge Blechman appears to harbor no favoritism for or against either side.

Appears to show favoritism towards the government on a consistent basis.

Legal Knowledge –

In my opinion, Judge Blechman enjoys engaging in a solid dialogue with each attorney about the issues instead of judge asking us to quote the law. Motion hearings were much more intellectual and productive this way.

In my opinion, Judge Blechman does an excellent job of applying his legal knowledge to each case.

Judge Blechman appears to have a strong command of the existing case law and is receptive to new or novel argument on the existing law.

Overall –

Judge Blechman is one of my favorite Judges to appear in front of.

Always a pleasure appearing before Judge Blechman!
Incisive intellect with an affinity at getting to the crux of the matter.

Hon. Luis F. Calderon:

Demeanor –

Judge Calderon is a pleasure to be in front of every time I have had to be in front of him.

Impartiality –

For a prior criminal defense attorney, this Judge is very State friendly.

Overall –

Welcome Judge Calderon! It is a great pleasure handling cases in front of such a likable, level-headed judge.

Hon. Keith A. Carsten:

Demeanor –

I believe Judge Carsten is always patience and courteous to attorneys and their clients.

Judge Carsten tries his best to be respectful of everyone in the courtroom.

I like Judge Carsten, he can get a bit testy, and sometimes he is more a former Prosecutor than a former defense attorney, but the vast majority of the time he is great Judge to be in front of and I am sorry to see him leaving us in criminal.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Carsten appears to demonstrate bias in his favoring rulings that benefit the State more than those supported by legal precedent.

I believe you will be treated fairly in front of Judge Carsten.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I believe that Judge Carsten is a unbiased and impartial Judge.

Judge Carsten is potentially the most even Judge when it comes to impartiality. He rules for and against what I want on different cases about equally, however I respect his decision even when I do not agree with it.

Seems to go out of way to rule for government in the nicest way possible.

Overall –

I enjoy practicing law in front of Judge Carsten and he is one of the best Judges.

Hard working jurist

Hon. A. James Craner:

Demeanor –

In my experience, Judge Craner will smile at you when he's getting impatient. Judge Craner is typically well-mannered and provides a comfortable atmosphere in his courtroom, however, he often times attempts to rush through matters and seems to not fully consider legal argument. He also often will indicate that paying restitution will result in a better offer, which has been deemed unconstitutional and poses concerns and possible bias in sentencing for cases where restitution may be at issue.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

Calendaring through JACS is not very efficient. Things will not get set until weeks later. The two-hour standby during the trial period does not work. It essentially holds defense attorney hostage and does not allow them to schedule other things, like jail visits and office conferences.

Judge Craner's PTCs and TMCs are consistently the most over booked and seem to always waste the most time. I cannot say that it is his fault, he doesn't have people approach and does the sidebars and

chit chats, but I cannot figure out why it always seems to be his courtroom that causes the most time problems.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Craner demonstrates a high level of professional decorum in his courtroom; however, he seems to favor the State in his legal rulings.

Judge Craner often times appears to have some disdain for DV cases but it is fairly evenly split between the defendant and the victim, it's just hard to know which one he will take it out on for each day/case/etc.

Impartiality –

Judge Craner appears to show favoritism towards the State.

Legal Knowledge –

Often times Judge Craner's belief of what the law is and what it actual says are somewhat different, however he is usually willing to be convinced that he is incorrect.

Overall –

On occasion, grappling with remaining patient with defendants and lawyers.

Hon. Daniel P. Dawson:

Diligence –

Judge Dawson seems to take too long on each case, requiring irrelevant and unnecessary information

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Robert J. Egan:

Demeanor –

I have only had one case in front of Judge Robert J. Egan, but it is my opinion that he was very considerate of everyone who spoke and did not let his emotions effect his demeanor towards anybody in the courtroom.

I feel like I am getting a fair hearing before Judge Egan and that's all you can really ask for from a judge. Judge Egan appears thoughtful and fair.

Judge Egan is consistently respectful, polite, and patient with all parties.

I had the pleasure to be in front of Judge Egan as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney and he is one of the best to be in front of. To tell you what kind of person he is, during out first trial with him, we ran SUPER late, and he walked the clerks to their car to they could move it out of the garage before it closed. That genuine niceness is how he is ALL THE TIME. I want him back in criminal ASAP.

Diligence –

Slow but worth the wait usually - litigants can be assured they're getting an honest, thoughtful opinion.

Judge Egan's PTC can run a bit long, but it's not too big of a problem, and he's always fine with attorneys showing up at 10:30 or so to miss the early rush and jumping in amongst the PD clients.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Egan is one of the most caring and even keeled Judges I have ever been in front of and he consistently treats people with respect regardless of their positions in life.

Impartiality –

Judge Egan appears utterly free of any favoritism against either side

Legal Knowledge –

Makes some puzzling evidence rulings during trial.

Judge Egan appears to have a strong command of the law, and what he does not know he learns quickly after listening to argument by both sides.

When Judge Egan doesn't already know the right thing to do legally, he usually appears to allow the parties to convince him of what is right. I don't know what you can ask for more than that.

Overall –

Judge Egan is one of the best Judges that I have had the pleasure to be in front of consistently (in my opinion at least) and I say that as having been able to be in front of him on both the state and defense side.

It is always a good day in court with Judge Egan. He listens, cares about the cases, and tries his best to make sure that everyone leaves feeling heard and respected.

A natural jurist.

Hon. John Marshall Kest:

Demeanor –

Judge John Kest appears to have an implicit bias against people of color, including attorneys and defendants.

Diligence –

Judge Kest is very prompt, but not always very efficient. He seems to get bogged down in irrelevant or unnecessary details

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Kest appears to prefer arguments from male attorneys and tends to rehabilitate White potential jurors but not black jurors. He also has appeared to confused black attorneys with defendants on multiple occasions

Judge John Kest appears to have an implicit bias against people of color, including attorneys and defendants. Judge John Kest seems to treat female attorneys differently and appears to dismiss their arguments more readily than male attorneys' arguments."

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge John Kest appears to be biased against lower income clients and their attorneys at times. There also seems to be racial bias on his part as well.

Judge Kest appears to harbor unconscious bias against parties based on race / national origin. His behavior in court gives the appearance of treating parties differently based upon race. It seems that the judge is not aware of this apparent bias, and it appears to not affect his sentences, but his conduct during trial and during hearing time strongly suggests that the judge harbors unconscious race based views. It often times appears that Judge Kest plays favorites with certain attorneys or certain types of cases.

Impartiality –

It appears that Judge Kest does his best to ensure that the state attorneys prove their case based on his pretrial and trial rulings.

Judge Kest appears to assist State Attorney's in trying their cases and tends to make rulings that favor allowing evidence of guilt in rather than evidence that suggests innocence

Judge Kest appears to lean towards the State.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge John Kest appears to show favoritism toward the State.

Judge Kest appears to harbor favoritism towards the state as evidenced by his rulings and conduct during trial. He does not appear to allow this to affect his sentencing after trial, which appears free from favoritism notwithstanding his pretrial and trial rulings.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

It appears that Judge Kest does not understand hearsay rules.

Judge Kest does not appear to understand hearsay evidence

Judge Kest does not seem to have an understanding of hearsay rules and caselaw.

Judge John Kest appears to still be going on civil rules, not criminal.

Judge Kest appears to have stopped learning law some time ago. His attention to detail and comprehension of complex legal issues appears insufficient for the task of criminal litigation.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Sally D. M. Kest:

Demeanor –

It is my opinion that Hon. Sally D.M Kest is not very well trained in the art of showing respect to Defense Counsel or defendants. It seems that Hon. Sally D.M Kest consistently talks-over, cuts-off, and yells at Defense Counsel and defendants. In my opinion, “professionalism demands courtesy.”

I had the pleasure of practicing in front of Judge Kest and very much enjoyed my time in front of her. She always followed the law and when we had the occasional disagreement it was solved by providing case law.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It is my opinion that this Judge does not want to listen nor show respect to anyone but the State.

In my opinion Judge Sally D. Kest is impatient and discourteous. Judge Kest seems to lack tolerance for the juveniles she presides over, specifically those of a lower economic class.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It seems or appears that Judge Sally D.M. Kest has little patience for clients in that she seems to question, berate, and yell at the clients and their parents/guardians if they are late. In my opinion Judge Kest lacks sympathy or understanding for those indigent clients relying entirely on their parents or public transportation. Judge Sally Kest seems to be annoyed at defense counsel for making objections and it appears she attempts to prevent defense counsel from making argument and seems she does not care for defense counsel consulting with co-counsel. In my opinion her tone makes clear she is annoyed and Judge Sally Kest says "thank you" to indicate her abrupt termination of a conversation.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

It appears Judge Kest does not respect the time of the people in her courtroom. It seems that she often comes to court late, sometimes over an hour late, but does not make any of the attorneys or clerks aware of what is happening, requiring everyone to sit and wait until she is present.

Judge Sally Kest seems or appears to care very little about respecting attorneys' and staffs' time.

It is my opinion that this Judge does not have regard for Exhibiting promptness and efficiency, several cases will be set for worthless restitution hearings at the request of the State, without a rationale for having such a hearing. However, the Defense is hardly allowed time for its hearings.

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Freedom from Bias –

It seems that Hon. Sally D. M. Kest has a clear pro-prosecution, and pro-affluent bias. In my opinion, Hon. Sally D. M. Kest treats Public Defenders and Public Defender clients, who are usually people of lower social economic status like second class citizens.

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In my opinion there are differences in not only the tone and demeanor Judge Sally Kest takes with children and parents who appear Caucasian and/or affluent, but also the rulings she makes and dispositions she hands down. Judge Sally Kest appears to politely small talk and joke even with parents and children who appear Caucasian, and her rulings seem considerably more defense friendly. On the other hand, in my opinion children and parents of color are spoken to in a harsh tone, shown little sympathy, and rarely prevail in legal requests.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Sally Kest appears to have equal disdain for all parties regardless of their positions in life.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

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Heavily favors the State.

Judge Sally Kest appears blatant in her favoritism towards the State. Judge Sally Kest appears to be rude and dismissive to defense attorneys and more specifically Assistant Public Defenders.

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[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

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[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

Despite the paucity of competition, it seems or appears that Judge Sally Kest is lacking in legal knowledge relative to her peers.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It is my opinion that Sally D. M. Kest has the ability to understand the law, but it appears she chooses to ignore it. It is well founded (with evidence) that multiple writs have been granted in the last few months where her decisions have been overturned, sometimes with opinions even when the point is moot.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Kest has also had at least six to seven motions to recuse filed against her in the past year that were granted. In my opinion Judge Sally Kest does not understand the Rules of Evidence and rules incorrectly much of the time.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Sally Kest either does not know the law or purposefully disregards it, it seems opinions from the 5th DCA need to be handed to her to remind her how to do things. It appears Judge Sally Kest refuses to read any caselaw that is not provided three days in advance which seems impractical, illogical, and unmanageable when issues happen mid-hearing. It appears Judge Sally Kest's interpretation of the law is based not on practical experience but in a manner which supports her convicting a child and handing down the harshest possible outcome - even if not legal. In my opinion Judge Sally Kest either does not know the criminal burden of proof or outright disregards it.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It is my opinion that Judge Sally D. M. Kest has no ability to be fair and impartial, nor treat people with respect.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Fundamental Fairness: I am convinced this judge would be better suited in a civil division where the standard is clear and convincing. I'm not entirely sure she realizes how serious and substantial the beyond a reasonable doubt standard is.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Alicia L. Latimore:

Demeanor –

It is my opinion that when Judge Alicia L. Latimore had a criminal docket she was not courteous to attorneys, but was always courteous to the defendants in front of her. Although she may scream at the attorneys, she appeared to always treat defendants with respect.

Diligence –

It appears that Judge Alicia L. Latimore is often late, but does the courtesy of calling the clerks and making everyone in the courtroom aware of the time she will be there.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Seems to not care what time the docket is scheduled to start vs. time she actually decides to take the bench.

Freedom from Bias –

Often times it appears that Judge Latimore will give the benefit of the doubt to minority defendants (which probably still doesn't balance the system).

Legal Knowledge –

It appears that Judge Latimore does not understand hearsay.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Marc L. Lubet:

Demeanor –

I cannot say enough nice things about Judge Lubet. I am very sorry to hear he is leaving the bench. This is a great loss to the 9th Circuit.

I will miss Judge Lubet when he leaves the bench, he is one of my favorite Judges to practice in front of.

Judge Lubet seems to be a nice person but in the courtroom he seems more preoccupied with his docket numbers than with doing justice.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Does gives us the time to try to get things done before he takes the bench.

Judge Lubet may not be on time often, in my opinion he takes time for all of his cases to come to the right resolution. Being able to speak to a judge tends to make things run more efficiently in the long run.

very efficient and will provide written orders quickly.

I'm not sure how Judge Lubet and his JA consistently knock out cases after cases. It truly is incredible how they are able to consolidate massively outgrown dockets into a more manageable case load for all.

Judge Lubet moves through his docket quickly once he shows up to work, but sometimes a 9am docket doesn't start until 11am.

Judge Lubet moves very quickly through the docket once he takes the bench... but taking the bench is usually a guessing game from 15 minutes after everything is noticed to an hour after hearings are noticed.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

Appears to sanction litigious attorneys seeking to advocate on behalf of their clients.

In my opinion, Judge Lubet does not discriminate and treats each defendant fairly.

Beyond a Reasonable Doubt means something in this division. Good to see a judge holding the state to their burden!

Judge Lubet appreciates quick resolutions regardless of the defendant's gender/age/race/ethnicity/etc.

Impartiality –

Appears to make good offers but no offer is a good offer if a client is innocent or not guilty. Appears to pressure Defense counsel when the pressure should be on the state not to charge certain cases.

Judge Lubet is impartial in his rulings, in my opinion.

Judge Lubet appears to show favoritism towards the State, especially when they have appeared in front of him or been assigned to his courtroom. In those instances, it seems like he will tend to rule in favor of that prosecutor in "close" issues.

Shows zero bias one way or the other, in my experience. Generally speaking a great judge, wise and fair. Willing to do what is right, regardless of political pressure. He does seem to have a sentencing bias against defendants convicted of firearms cases, however. The sentences in firearms cases are higher in his court, in my experience.

Judge Lubet still has a little defense attorney in him.

Judge Lubet appears exceptionally fair-minded.

Legal Knowledge –

It appears Judge Lubet reads updated case law, will research motions prior to hearings, and tries to make an accurate legal decision.

In my opinion, Judge Lubet knows the law and does an excellent job of applying it.

Great judge. Sometimes feels like frontier justice in this courtroom. But this court does what the court feels is best.

Judge Lubet enjoys being challenged with new and innovative legal questions /scenarios. To really litigate a legal issue is quite enjoyable in this courtroom.

Overall –

I believe that Judge Lubet was one of the best Judges in Orange County and he will be missed when he retires.

If only the rules would allow Judge Lubet to stay with the 9th Circuit past this year-we are losing an amazing judge, he will be missed.

Judge Lubet seems to love his job and that makes the rest of us love to practice in front of him. We will be sad to see him go after this year.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Leticia Marquez:

Demeanor –

I had the pleasure of practicing in front of her. I cannot say enough nice things about her. While I know her on both a personal and professional level, I absolutely never felt a tinge of bias from her. She was just as tough on me as every other attorney. She is personable, knowledgeable, and professional.

I think Judge Marquez has an excellent demeanor and is courteous to everyone.

Judge Marques is usually patient and courteous.

Diligence –

Appears to only be interested in minimizing the docket.

Generally very efficient docket management.

Freedom from Bias –

Appears to sanction litigious attorneys seeking to advocate on behalf of their clients. Appears to have her mind made up and railroads attorneys and arguments that are adverse to what the court appears to want. Appears to label not only arguments, but types of offenders, and types of attorneys.

Judge Marquez seems to be very impartial to either party. She exhibits a demeanor that is generally respectful of all litigants and parties who appear before her.

I believe Judge Marquez treats everyone equally in her courtroom.

Impartiality –

Appears to be neutral but in actuality it appears that the courts like or dislike for an attorney weighs supreme. This appears to be especially true on issues that could go either way, appears to pick favorites.

I believe Judge Marquez treats everyone equally and is impartial.

Legal Knowledge –

The court appears to her have mind made up on issues that lead to the appearance of being closed minded, disinterested, and at times discourteous. The court appears to side with the state and presumes case law that was neither cited by the state nor in existence.

In my opinion, Judge Marquez has done an excellent job learning criminal law.

Judge Marquez will read the law that is applicable for your case, which is good. But she over-thinks the law and sometimes comes up with an interpretation that conflicts with the holding.

Overall –

I always enjoy appearing in front of Judge Marquez and she makes practicing law easy in her courtroom.

She does credit to the robe.

Hon. Jon B. Morgan:

Demeanor –

I cannot say enough nice things about Judge Morgan. I have witnessed some crazy antics take place in his courtroom and he always keeps his professional demeanor. I don't think anything rattles that man!

One of the most composed Judges sitting on the bench.

Judge Morgan frequently demonstrates a high level of patience, tolerance, and self control. He runs his courtroom in a manner that is respectful of all litigants, witnesses, courthouse employees, and jurors.

Judge Morgan is very calm and patient and I have never seem him actually loose his cool with a client

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Morgan has consistently exhibited impartiality and fairness in his treatment of all who appear before him.

A wise, fair jurist. One of the best in the circuit.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

A model judge for the circuit in terms of fairness.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Morgan will always follow case law provided to him if it is on point even if he strongly disagrees with the outcome it may have on a case.

Overall –

A fine jurist.

Hon. Lisa T. Munyon:

Demeanor –

It is my opinion Judge Lisa T. Munyon is generally courteous to people in her courtroom.

Diligence –

Judge Lisa Munyon appears to be efficient with everyone's time in the courtroom; she rarely ever leaves attorneys, defendants, and staff waiting around for long periods, and seems to make an effort to be efficient.

Impartiality –

Has a well-earned reputation as a harsh sentencing judge in criminal cases. Very diligent, no-nonsense and smart judge, but the sentences are consistently heavy-handed.

Judge Munyon appears to demonstrate favoritism towards the state at sentencing,

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Munyon seems to be unexpectedly decent in terms of legal knowledge.

Hon. Renee A. Roche:

Demeanor –

While some feel that Judge Roche can be short with people, she genuinely cares about her job and doing a good job

Diligence –

Judge Roche is very prompt and efficient. She doesn't ask for irrelevant information and runs a very organized court room

Judge Roche does not waste time. She moves quickly through cases, expecting parties to be prepared and succinct in addressing cases in front of her.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Roche is very fair minded.

Judge Roche seems to be one of the fairest judges I have appeared before. She is fearless in exercising independent judgment and following the law.

Impartiality –

Judge Roche makes a genuine effort to get rulings right. She can make hard decisions

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Roche appears consistently fair to all litigants before her.

Overall –

Judge Roche is quirky but fair. She seems to really care about the law and justice, and regardless of her varied facial expressions or random commentary, I would 100% request that she preside over every one of my cases than almost any other judge.

Hon. Tim Shea:

Demeanor –

A little too sarcastic at times.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Shea is one of the kindest men I have ever known. The 9th Circuit is honored to have him on the bench.

In my opinion, Judge Shea has one of the best demeanors and makes practicing law fun!

Judge Shea is very courteous to everyone in the courtroom on a regular basis.

Depends on the day and time--In my opinion morning Judge Shea is a better Judge Shea

There are very few Judges that I enjoy being in front of more than Judge Shea. When he is on, not only do we get the correct rulings and the efficient docket control, but I also usually have a giant smile on my face from cracking up and his stories and asides.

Diligence –

Judge Shea runs an efficient courtroom.

Judge Shea does not waste time. He is quick-paced and really does focus on judicial economy. Would love to have him in a full time division!

Impartiality –

Judge Shea is much easier to work with as a defense attorney in my experience.

Legal Knowledge –

It seems that Hon. Tim Shea has is well versed in the law both procedurally and substantively.

In my opinion, Judge Shea knows juvenile law well and does an excellent job applying the law to the facts.

Overall –

I believe that Judge Shea is one of the friendliest Judges and he makes everyone feel comfortable when you appear in front of him. Judge Shea is such an asset to the juvenile justice system and I am glad he is the Judge.

Hon. Kim Shepard:

Demeanor –

In my opinion, Judge Shepard needs to work on her demeanor.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Shepard rarely ends an encounter with a respectful tone or demeanor. She frequently raises her voice to scold or berate attorneys, parties, random passersby demonstrating a lack of respect for those who appear in her courtroom.

Seems to disregard the time of others and appears to be extremely unprofessional.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears Judge Shepard does not seem to care about efficiency and more about her personal courtroom policy.

Judge Shepard seems to try to run her courtroom like a civil courtroom, and appears to put form over substance. Judge Shepard seems to get bogged down in minutiae.

Slow to push out rulings, orders.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Shepard's procedures both in and out of court are inefficient, difficult to understand and a waste of time. They create more work on others and does not seem to be helping efficiency.

Judge Shepard seems to delight in crafting convoluted procedures that make little sense and are woefully inefficient. The procedures in Judge Shepard's courtroom are questionable and do not respect attorneys' time at all.

Judge Shepard appears to have adopted a series of division-specific policies which have the effect of decreasing efficient handling of cases. It appears that the judge wants to micromanage a variety of issues tangential to her job as judge. While it appears that these policies are well-founded in the rules, they are in stark contradiction to every other judge in the jurisdiction and dramatically decrease the efficient resolution of cases.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my experience in dealing with her, Judge Shepard appears to have an equal amount of disdain towards everyone - criminal defense attorneys, defendants, etc regardless of who they are. In a weird way, it's commendable.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

Judge Shepard appears to be trying hard to learn the rules of evidence and criminal procedure; but she seems to defer to the State, when she is in doubt.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Seems to have hard time not showing disdain for persons accused.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears Judge Sheppard does not understand hearsay.

Judge Shepard does not appear to understand hearsay rules and case law.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Shepard appears to have little knowledge of the law. It appears that the Judge does not have the requisite knowledge base to perform her duties.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears that Judge Shepard may require an evidence refresher course.

Seems to not read current case law.

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, it is unfortunate that Judge Shepard appears to be more concerned with the minutiae of how her courtroom works as well as mico-managing the attorneys (both private and state) who appear before her. In my opinion, the job of the Court is to reach the correct resolution, not get bogged down in the details and miss the legal big picture. Judge Shepard appears to be missing the forest for the trees.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Dianna M. Tennis:

Demeanor –

Judge Tennis is amazing, especially on the family law cases I have had in front of her. She usually does a great job asking questions to keep the parties and attorneys on track during hearings to make sure she gets the information she needs to get to make a decision quickly and efficiently.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Tennis seems to be one of the smartest judges on the bench. Her prior experience as a defense attorney is invaluable to her abilities to preside over evidentiary matters.

Overall –

Judge Tennis is, in her own words as heard in court, "amazeballs." She is down to earth and easy to handle cases in front of. I would gladly have Judge Tennis preside over any of my cases.

Hon. Dan Traver:

Demeanor –

I have had the pleasure of practicing in front of him. I cannot say enough great things about him. It is shocking how poised and knowledgeable he is with such little time on the bench. I hope he continues to run and remain on the bench as long as possible.

Judge Traver is patient and even-tempered.

Judge Traver is very professional and does show courtesy to attorneys appearing before him, however, he will often time interrupt attorneys when they attempt to lay a record. It seems that Judge Traver will have his mind set on how a particular matter should be argue and will not allow an attorney to argue in the manner that works for them and/or the case. It seems Judge Traver could benefit from letting attorneys lay the record they believe they need to lay without cutting them off to a point that the record will become jumbled.

Judge Traver has always been professional in my opinion, but he can be very stiff sometimes both in personality and judicial rulings.

Very professional.

Diligence –

Overall, Just Traver is very efficient and prompt in his handling of matters.

Judge Dan Traver typically takes the bench early each day and is almost always very prepared, having read and reviewed motions and case law ahead of time.

Slow to rule.

Extremely prompt

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Traver is a newer judge and at times appears to still be adjusting to his position; however, it also appears that any "unease" he may exhibit at times may be motivated by a very sincere and thoughtful desire to be extremely fair and impartial to litigants and their counsel.

Overall, Judge Traver makes an honest effort to not let bias impact his rulings, however, in domestic violence cases he does appear to have an issue setting some aside bias in those particular cases.

Often times it appears that Judge Traver will give better sentences or resolutions to defendant who are represented by private attorneys or are of different races.

Impartiality –

Judge Traver appears to be uncomfortable with applying statutorily authorized downward departures in pleas to the bench/ plea conferences.

Judge Traver, for the most part, is fair to both sides. However, it seems when there is a repetitive issue in the courtroom as it relates to the disclosure of discovery, conveying of plea offers, etc. he is not willing to make decision that would curtail those issues.

Lacking criminal experience before he became a judge is a weakness that this judge is well-suited to overcome with time given his excellent qualities of intelligence, thoughtfulness and work-ethic. Very erudite and careful. The problem is that jurists like Judge Traver who do not have criminal law backgrounds tend to hew to the prosecution's point of view when it's time to make a close call, whether it be a discovery matter, evidence question, or punishment determination. It is perhaps an unconscious bias by the court, but one that is recognizable to the observer from the defense counsel table. But this writer believes that given the judge's role model is Judge Antoon, as stated in his Orlando Sentinel judicial debate as a candidate, Judge Traver, in time, will overcome this particular weakness and will be a great judge. He has all the skills.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Traver appears to be extremely concerned with getting things legally correct, and that effort is appreciated. Judge Traver appears to know that he is relatively inexperienced in criminal law and appears to be humble enough to constantly work to shore up the resultant deficiency of knowledge.

Judge Traver seems to really want to be accurate and knowledgeable in the law.

Although Judge Traver has not practice criminal law, he does take the time to read and research matters prior to hearings. While this is good, it seems that he sometimes comes into court with a decision already made, which can lead to him cutting off the attorney making the argument and attempts to put them in a box with their arguments.

Judge Traver ALWAYS tries to make the correct ruling, he reads the law, motions and cases before ruling on issues, you can tell he is really trying to come to the correct ruling, even if it one he disagrees with.

Judge Traver is always prepared for every hearing. He reads all written motions ahead of time and makes himself familiar with the cases and motions that are before him.

Judge Traver is very smart and well prepared and knows the law or will learn the law for your case.

Overall –

Judge Traver just won a professionalism award, which was well deserved. Judge Traver is improving all the time, (in my opinion) and does an excellent job in exercising patience and courtesy towards everyone in the courtroom. Judge Traver appears to be an especially harsh sentencer, although it does not appear to be motivated by the decision to go to trial or for any other improper reason. Judge Traver's weakness (and strength) appears to be his (seeming) relative lack of empathy and emotion; on the one hand, he is not at all prone to outbursts or other judicial misbehavior, but on the other he seems to struggle with mitigation and understanding the life experiences of criminal defendants.

Growing into the seat he occupies.

Hon. Greg A. Tynan:

Demeanor –

Judge Tynan demonstrates courtesy, patience, tolerance, and self-control; this is most apparent in his dealing with sovereign citizens. He is also very courteous to the attorneys and allows both sides to be heard.

I have practiced very little in front of him but the small amount of time was pleasant. He is professional and personable.

Judge Greg Tynan is typically very patient and respectful to attorneys and criminal defendants alike.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Tynan runs a tight ship. He is there to get business done, however, he always hears everyone out but comes to conclusions that are fair and don't waste either party's time. He is extremely courteous to defendants and parties.

Judge Tynan is usually a very easy to Judge to go in front of, and there are few that are more prepared than him, but every now and then he can be very unwilling to accommodate criminal defendants on different things, even things as simple as a set-off turn in date.

Diligence –

Judge Tynan is on the bench early most of the time. His handling of cases is also very efficient yet allows the attorneys additional time to speak with the clients.

In my experience, Judge Tynan will come prepared for a hearing having read your motion and supporting case law the night before.

Judge Tynan is superb at handling his docket. Very strict on granting continuances but it does push the discovery process and resolution of cases along to keep the docket tight and moving. PTCs are great in this courtroom as the three simple responses that are to be given at PTC are given and moving on to the next case. He is always does his research beforehand on motions and is ready to give his ruling in a quick and fair manner.

The two-hour standby during the trial period does not work. It essentially holds defense attorney hostage and does not allow them to schedule other things, like jail visits and office conferences.

Freedom from Bias –

I don't think he has a bias toward a race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, but in my opinion, he is pro cop.

I have never seen Judge Tynan take this into account.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Tynan appears to show favoritism towards the Prosecution.

In Judge Tynan's courtroom, it can feel like he is prosecuting from the bench.

Judge Greg Tynan seems or appears to favor and defer to the prosecution when making rulings on objections and motions.

Earned reputation as a pro-prosecution judge.

Judge Tynan just deals in the law and that is how it should be done. There is no favoritism on either side. As an experienced litigator in criminal law and a judge who researches the issues in the cases before him, he makes his decision on based on the current state of the law.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Tynan most of the time remembers that he is no longer a State Attorney, in my opinion.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Tynan knows and has a great grasp of the law. He lays an impeccable record with his rulings.

Overall –

I generally prefer not to handle matters in Judge Tynan's division.

In my opinion, practicing in front of Judge Tynan is great experience.

Hon. Reginald K. Whitehead:

Demeanor –

Judge Whitehead is very patient with the drug court participants. He shows them tough love and allows them ample opportunity to explain their situation.

Judge Whitehead is extremely courteous and kind to all attorneys and individuals that come before him

It is my opinion that Judge Reginald K. Whitehead is one of the nicest and most patient judges. It appears he is always willing to let an attorney speak and does not demean them if he does not agree with what they say.

It is always pleasant to have court with Judge Whitehead.

Judge Whitehead is all of these things in my opinion.

Judge Whitehead is the perfect judge to handle the mental health court, drug court, and other diversionary courts as he is nice, calm, peaceful and has a way with the clients, even when they are being reprimanded

Judge Whitehead is extremely respectful to all who appear before him- attorneys and defendants included.

Diligence –

Sometimes Judge Whitehead is a little slow, but not in an inefficient way

Judge Whitehead could resolve more probation violation cases at the orange county jail when the state is unwilling to resolve cases even with guidelines plea offers.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Whitehead does not appear to be a legal scholar, but who cares, he is a competent, friendly, humble, and well-meaning judge, which is far better.

In my opinion Hon. Reginald K. Whitehead, is very a good example of someone who knows the law.

Overall –

In my opinion, Hon. Reginald K. Whitehead is one of the most well-rounded judges I have had the honor of appearing in front of.

Hon. Tanya Davis Wilson:

Demeanor –

Judge Wilson is always a pleasure to be in front of, in a great mood, and in my experience consistently runs a great courtroom.

Ninth Circuit – Substitute or Senior Circuit Court Judges - Numerical Results

	<u>Demeanor</u>	<u>Diligence</u>	<u>Freedom from Bias</u>	<u>Impartiality</u>	<u>Legal Knowledge</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Hon. John Adams	6.10	6.30	6.39	5.58	5.79	5.67
Hon. Theotis Bronson	4.59	4.52	4.90	4.90	4.40	4.27
Hon. Thomas R. Kirkland	7.43	6.57	7.14	6.87	6.50	6.81
Hon. Charles N. Prather	6.84	6.41	7.28	6.83	6.56	6.74
Hon. R. James Stroker	5.58	6.06	5.88	5.83	5.83	5.58
Hon. Emerson R. Thompson, Jr.	5.22	6.23	5.68	5.83	6.04	5.23

Ninth Circuit – Substitute or Senior Circuit Court Judges – Comments

Hon. John Adams

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Adams seems to not remember the rules of evidence and criminal procedure very well; Judge Adams seems unwilling to read caselaw and consider the defense argument.

Hon. Theotis Bronson

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Bronson could exercise more patience, respect and self control. His attitude on the bench does not reflect his his knowledge and obvious experience.

Judge Theotis Bronson seems or appear to have little patience, respect, or professional courtesy for attorneys, criminal defendants, and potential jurors alike.

Diligence –

In my opinion, Judge Bronson is too efficient. In my experience, he rushed through the docket, did not allow defendants to be heard, and made several small mistakes along the way. He exercises too much urgency and in my opinion, haste makes waste.

Judge Theotis Bronson seems or appears to care very little for everyone's time except his own - including the time and comfort of jurors.

Freedom from bias –

Judge Theotis Bronson seems or appears to have less respect for female attorneys than for male attorneys. Judge Bronson sometimes speaks in a more condescending manner to female attorneys than to male attorneys.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Bronson, in my opinion, appears deficient in his knowledge of criminal law and procedures.

Hon. Thomas R. Kirkland

Legal Knowledge –

It appears that Judge Kirkland is lacking in knowledge of criminal law and procedure.

Hon. Charles N. Prather

Freedom from bias –

Judge Charles N. Prather appears to be State oriented, and it is my opinion that he is biased against criminal defendants.

Hon. R. James Stroker

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence-

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from bias-

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Emerson R. Thompson, Jr.

Demeanor-

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Thompson appears to sometimes lose his patience with litigants who are not familiar with his "old school," exceedingly formal way of running his courtroom.

Freedom from bias-

Judge Thompson seems elitist sometimes.

Judge Emerson Thompson seems or appears to have less respect for female attorneys than for male attorneys. Judge Thompson, at times, speaks to female attorneys in a manner that is just unacceptable in that it's as if he is speaking to a little girl, rather than a professional adult woman.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Orange County – County Court Judges - Numerical Results

	Demeanor	Diligence	Freedom from Bias	Impartiality	Legal Knowledge	Overall
Hon. Maureen Bell	5.43	6.14	7.47	7.21	6.11	6.59
Hon. Jeanette Dejuras Bigney	5.98	6.24	6.24	5.43	5.55	5.76
Hon. Andrew L. Cameron	8.55	8.03	8.31	7.93	7.19	8.00
Hon. Tina Caraballo	7.17	7.04	7.73	7.50	5.63	6.79
Hon. Nancy L. Clark	8.75	8.39	8.64	8.54	7.87	8.37
Hon. Brian F. Duckworth	8.96	8.57	8.90	8.51	8.30	8.49
Hon. Jamie Grosshans	8.20	7.72	8.17	7.88	6.63	7.44
Hon. Evellen Jewett	6.73	6.59	7.21	6.87	5.81	6.54
Hon. Steve Jewett	8.28	8.63	8.53	8.44	8.16	8.12
Hon. Gisela T. Laurent	8.48	8.23	8.44	8.22	7.48	8.21
Hon. Wilfredo Martinez	2.80	2.78	2.56	2.28	3.37	2.27
Hon. Adam McGinnis	7.59	6.83	7.55	7.56	6.58	6.77
Hon. Wayne Shoemaker	7.97	8.09	8.53	8.14	8.00	8.22
Hon. Elizabeth Starr	6.08	6.76	7.18	6.47	6.36	6.39

Orange County – County Court Judges - Comments

Hon. Maureen Bell

Demeanor –

Appears to have good and bad days that substantially effect the courtrooms proceedings, evidentiary rulings, and outcomes on substantive motions.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

She is patient if the lawyer is prepared. Otherwise, not so much.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears that Judge Bell has a difficult time demonstrating self-control

It seems that Judge Bell has a wide spectrum of moods, and one never knows which one to expect walking into her courtroom and how that will affect your case.

Seems to be very impatient.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I've been doing criminal work for almost 6 years and I still have zero idea what is going to happen when I walk into Judge Bell's courtroom, it might be good, it might be bad, but you will never know.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Bell seems to truly treat every person who comes before her the exact same, black or white, rich or poor, man or woman.

I have no idea who Judge Bell likes and dislikes, so she must be mostly free from bias.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Jeanette Dejuris Bigney

Demeanor –

In my opinion, Judge Bigney appeared to demonstrate a lack of patience with court staff, public defenders, and defendants. She also appeared to me to extend a higher level of courtesy to private attorneys than public defenders. In my opinion, her demeanor appeared curt when she may not have agreed with an attorney's legal argument. Her level of patience with defendants' lack of comprehension was not adequate, in my opinion.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears that Judge Bigney cares more about how quickly she can move on from a case than treating people with respect.

In my opinion, Judge Bigney has been courteous to my clients when she has given them bail at the jail.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears that Judge Bigney feels that any objection by counsel is a personal attack on her and she responds in such a way to undermine her authority. In my opinion the outbursts and attacks on attorneys in open court (and while being broadcast via youtube no less) are not the perception we want the public to have of the bench.

In my opinion Judge Bigney is frequently impatient. Judge Bigney is constantly rushing counsel and Defendants at initial appearance, often spending no more than half a minute on each Defendant. Judge Bigney's impatience is particularly concerning in translator cases where counsel must wait for accurate translation prior to addressing the Court. This makes it extremely difficult for counsel to effectively represent clients who do not speak English at initial appearance. It is also my opinion that Judge Bigney does not treat counsel or Defendant's with respect. On at least one occasion Judge Bigney has stated publicly, on live stream, that counsel exhibited unprofessional and "juvenile" behavior.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I always see Judge Bigney treating people with respect and her courtroom is very pleasant in which to practice.

Judge Bigney appears unwilling to entertain argument before her and appears to treat litigation and the laying of records as personally offensive. She appears impatient and lacking in basic courtesy, particularly towards defendants and defense attorneys.

Diligence –

Judge Bigney seemed to appreciate efficiency from all parties involved. However, in my opinion, Judge Bigney and all parties could benefit from the Judge increasing her dedication to timeliness. In my opinion, Judge Bigney appeared to value expediency in a higher regard than quality.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears Judge Bigney would rather move a case downtown than make legal rulings.

Judge Bigney never wastes my time when I have a hearing at the jail, which I greatly appreciate.

Judge Bigney's failure to fully address matters before her at initial appearances tends to create work for the trial court Judges. It would be very helpful if Judge Bigney would allow defendants before her at the jail the opportunity to have a full and complete hearing in order to expedite their case and minimize the amount of turmoil and uncertainty for the defendant as well as the victims and their families. It appears that by refusing to address all issues pertaining to a case, Judge Bigney is attempting to shorten the amount of time she has to spend in court. In my opinion, the tax payers of Orange County are suffering by paying to incarcerate individuals who are entitled to bond and by tying up the precious resources of the trial courts who have to readdress the cases.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

It appears Judge Bigney would rather finish work early with several Rocket Dockets than allow defense attorneys to make any argument on their clients behalf and will take it personally when they try to.

Judge Bigney treats everyone equally and is free from bias, in my opinion.

In my opinion Judge Bigney exhibits some bias against defendants who do not speak English. Judge Bigney will often rush through clients through initial appearance, to the point of preventing counsel from effectively being able to speak with defendants through the court provided translator.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It does not appear that Judge Bigney harbors racial, religious, gender, age, or national origin based biases. It would appear that she harbors strong unconscious class bias and appears utterly incapable of empathy or understanding, particularly when imposing financial release conditions.

Impartiality –

In my opinion, Judge Bigney appeared to have a greater tolerance and appreciation for the state than the accused.

Judge Bigney appears to make legal arguments for the State of Florida when they are unprepared. In my opinion, Judge Bigney does not show favoritism toward either side.

It appears Judge Bigney is more concerned with keeping defendant's in jail than following the law when it comes to initial appearance determinations. In light of data showing the impact of pre-trial detention on individuals accused of crimes, in my opinion it is unfortunate that a more thorough and complete hearing is not conducted by her at IA. By refusing to hear argument of counsel and take meaningful testimony regarding bond, the Court in my opinion is turning the hearing into a rubber stamp process and leaving the mess to be sorted out by trial courts.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Bigney, in my opinion shows bias against Assistant Public defenders that she personally does not like.

It would appear that Judge Bigney, based on her rulings harbors strong affinity for the State over the Defense.

Legal Knowledge –

It appears that Judge Bigney does not understand initial appearance rules or her role in them. Judge Bigney appears to ignore or misunderstand caselaw regarding bonds and Nebbia holds.

In my opinion, Judge Bigney possesses a foundation in procedural and substantive law and can analyze legal issues; she brings style and class to the profession.

In my opinion Judge Bigney does not have a strong legal basis. Judge Bigney does not appear to understand what probable cause requires, especially the doctrine of constructive possession. Additionally, Judge Bigney does not understand the presumption of non-monetary release in the majority of cases and will go straight to requiring a "standard bond" rather than following the procedures laid out in the rules of criminal procedure.

In my opinion Judge Bigney does not prepare for court nor is she familiar with relevant case law, statutes and rules for her position. There are two main statutes and two main rules governing initial appearance. It seems as if Judge Bigney has not studied these statutes/rules and has not read relevant case law. In my opinion Judge Bigney relies on the Administrative Order (which is not the law) in making rulings.

It appears that Judge Bigney has an insufficient foundation in procedural and substantive law. She seems equally unwilling to listen to argument or learn from both counsel and from the numerous opinions from the 5th DCA which have addressed her rulings at first appearance hearings. Judge Bigney appears to treat argument on the law as personally offensive to her.

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Bigney is most concerned about finishing court as quickly as possible over anything else.

In my opinion, Judge Bigney is always a pleasure to appear in front of, (although it means going to the jail) because it means my client will get a fair bond hearing.

In my opinion, a Judge should display humility and legal fairness, even if the process of getting there can be tedious. Judge Bigney does not appear to display either of these traits and seems more concerned with getting out of court quickly than providing a full and fair hearing. Judge Bigney often cites the attorneys before her to the Rules of Professional Decorum, which appears to indicate she is more concerned with the respect due to the Court than the correct outcome in the cases before her. It would be refreshing to see Judge Bigney engage in open and full debate of legal matters and consider all sides before jumping to a conclusion.

Judge Bigney appears impatient with counsel and with litigants, seems to prioritize getting out of court as soon as possible over securing due process rights of criminal defendants, and appears consistently to improperly shift the burden to the defendant away from the state. Judge Bigney seems to have an insufficient legal basis for conducting hearings at first appearances, and also seems disinterested in reading the law or learning about it. Judge Bigney appears to treat argument by counsel as a personal attack on her as a judge, which suggests a greater degree of insecurity than is appropriate in a jurist.

Hon. Andrew L. Cameron

Demeanor –

Appears to be one of the most patient, open minded, and courteous judge.

In my opinion, Judge Cameron is patient and tolerant in Court.

In my opinion Judge Cameron exercises exceptional self-control and patience.

Judge Cameron is one of the coolest people I have met, Judge or otherwise, and I often strive to always be in such a convivial and upbeat manner.

Diligence –

Judge Cameron is always efficient with his docket.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Cameron does an excellent job of treating everyone equally, in my opinion.

I cannot imagine someone having a problem with Judge Cameron or vice versa as he treats everyone with respect.

Impartiality –

In my opinion, Judge Cameron is neutral towards both sides.

Legal Knowledge –

In my opinion, Judge Cameron possesses an ability to comprehend and analyze legal issues quickly.

Overall –

I always enjoy appearing in front of Judge Cameron for Court and he is compassionate about the law.

Hon. Tina Caraballo

Demeanor –

Judge Caraballo appears to consistently demonstrate patience and tolerance in her courtroom.

Legal Knowledge –

Judge Caraballo is doing an admirable job trying to learn as much law as possible for her position, in my opinion.

Hon. Nancy L. Clark

Demeanor –

Always a pleasure to appear before.

Judge Clark appears patient, tolerant, and conducts her courtroom with a high degree of self-control.

Overall –

Judge Clark is a great example for the rest of the judges to follow

Hon. Brian F. Duckworth

Demeanor –

Appears to be an exceptional judge with an impressive appreciation of the law.

In my opinion The Honorable Brian F. Duckworth has a very patient and calm demeanor.

In my opinion Judge Duckworth exercises exceptional self-control and patience. Judge Duckworth also treats counsel and Defendant's with the utmost respect.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Duckworth appears polite, patient, and consistently exhibits self-control.

Diligence –

Judge Duckworth has it figured out! He really goes through a docket swiftly.

Impartiality –

Judge Duckworth appears to have respect for his position as judge and does not favor one side over the other.

Legal Knowledge –

Appears to be an exceptionally well learned scholar on the law that actively seeks to expand on his knowledge and understanding on both substantive and procedural matters. Appears to make fair rulings and treats everyone that comes into his courtroom with profound respect. Appears to allow both the defense and the state an opportunity to grow as a trial attorney by being both a fair and learned judge and a courteous judge.

Judge Duckworth seems to research issues and be well-prepared for motions and trial.

Judge Duckworth has an excellent command of the law. Often understanding doctrine and case law prior to being provided a copy by counsel.

Hon. Jamie Grosshans

No Comments

Hon. Evellen Jewett

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Jewett is very courteous, in my opinion.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Jewett exercises considerable patience. However, Judge Jewett often is unable to control her facial expressions. Judge Jewett will frequently make faces during counsel's argument and in front of a jury during trial.

The worst thing I can say about Judge E. Jewett is that she has TOO much patience.

Diligence –

In my opinion, Judge Jewett seemed comfortable with appearing on the bench at a later time than was scheduled

Judge Jewett remembers what it is like to be an attorney and she tries to get the attorneys out as quickly as possible, in my opinion.

Judge E. Jewett appears to be having difficulty in trying to keep up with the speediness of county court, but appears to be trying her best to do so, which is very admirable.

Freedom from Bias –

Appears to show extreme prejudice against the defense in favor of the state.

Judge Jewett treats everyone equally, in my opinion.

Judge E. Jewett does a fantastic job the vast majority of the time dealing with the situations she finds herself in due to the constant movement of State Attorneys and PDs and her relearning county court law, in my opinion.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Evellen Jewett displays bias against the defense.

Judge E. Jewett is doing a fantastic job not giving criminal defendants a break because she was a PD nor holding PDs and Private Attorneys to a higher standard. I cannot say enough about how middle of the road she is in that respect, in my experience at least.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

We could all use periodic refreshers in the Rules of Evidence and the Rules of Criminal Procedure. This court especially.

Overall –

In my opinion, Judge Jewett is an asset to the County Court bench.

Can be overly hesitant to make a ruling in the middle of trial. From an attorney's perspective, this suggests the court does not know the law well enough to make rulings quickly enough without having numerous bench conferences which drag a misdemeanor trial longer than it needs to be.

Judge E. Jewett seems to be the kind of person who scores on this type of post will consistently go up and up as she continues to learn what is required of her new(ish) job.

Hon. Steve Jewett

Demeanor –

Appears to be a good judge that makes good offers, however there is no good offer for a client that is not guilty and or innocent.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Jewett exercises incredible patience and treats counsel and Defendant's with great respect.

Judge Steve Jewett is the model judge for county court.

Judge S. Jewett is in my opinion the best Judge that we have in all of the Ninth Circuit and should I ever end up on the bench I would strive to be as much like him as possible.

There seems to be almost nothing that can rattle or aggravate Judge Steve Jewett to losing his patience or self-control. He takes everything in stride, with such pleasant demeanor and understanding.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge S. Jewett is the bar which all other county Judges should be measured against.

Freedom from Bias –

Appears to like the attorney that makes the least amount of work for the judge.

In my opinion, Judge Jewett is extremely unbiased.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

In my opinion, it is impossible to tweet about how great Judge S. Jewett is because 140 characters are just never enough.

I would cut my fees in half if I could only take cases in front of Judge Steve Jewett, and live a very happy life. He is so pleasant, efficient, enjoyable to interact with and handle cases in front of that it is hard to rate other judges in comparison.

Hon. Gisela T. Laurent

Demeanor –

Appears to be an impressive judge with an exceptional amount of patience and a beautiful command of the law. When in doubt, the court appears to research the law and successfully ignores baseless arguments by the state. Appears to be exceptionally intelligent and well grounded in the law.

Very kind and thoughtful. Makes eyecontact with counsel as you argue.

Judge Laurent is so wonderful that she makes Friday afternoon PTCs bearable because you get to deal with her instead of HAVING to deal with her, in my opinion.

Overall –

Judge Laurent is great in my experience and I am always happy to take case that are in front of her.

Hon. Wilfredo Martinez

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Martinez is rude to attorneys and their clients and is very short with everyone.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Martinez generally has considerable patience. However, on several occasions Judge Martinez has made disparaging comments to counsel. Judge Martinez has called counsel unprofessional, unethical and on one occasion told counsel not to be a zealous advocate.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Martinez appears polite and patient, perhaps to a fault.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Martinez frequently wastes courtroom time.

In my opinion, Judge Martinez is always running late and cannot manage his docket properly.

Judge Martinez seems to reset matters that could be resolve the initial day they are set causing all parties to appear in court multiple times. He also will sua sponte strike jury panels or roll trials or, reset trials when he makes a finding that the sides are not ready.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Martinez requires defendant to return to court unnecessarily for various court dates and trial calls. it appears that it may be an attempt to wear down the defendant so they the case will resolve without a trial.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Martinez appears to on occasion take far too long to address relatively simple matters before him.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Martinez seems to hold Hispanic defendants to a higher standard than defendants of other races.

In my opinion, Judge Martinez is biased and it is reflected in his rulings and the things he says to attorneys, witnesses and defendants.

Judge Martinez has the best intentions but it appears that he believes most women are victims, even if they are the defendant.

Judge Martinez seems to hold hispanic defendants, witnesses, and jurors to a higher standard than other individuals. It seems, based on comments from the bench, that this is due to his background of becoming successful and thus imposes greater requirements on those individuals to "do better."

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion Judge Martinez shows favoritism towards victims and towards the Assistant State Attorneys. In my opinion, Judge Martinez allows State continuances when the case should be dropped.

It appears that Judge Martinez also shows favoritism towards male attorneys and is harder on female attorneys.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

If you are poor defendant or a lesser known attorney you seem to get much worse treatment than the well-established defense attorneys or wealthy defendants.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Martinez does not like the State or the Defense.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I believe he does things sua sponte when the Defense appears to be doing "too well"

It would appear based on Judge Martinez's courtroom decisions that he favors the state over the defense.

Judge Martinez appears to be more than happy giving your client the benefit of the doubt if the client hired the right attorney...otherwise...uh oh.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears that Judge Martinez does not understand hearsay.

Judge Martinez seems to misunderstand the rule on "opening the door" to prejudicial evidence, often overbroadening the rationale to allow in evidence with no foundation or otherwise inadmissible.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Martinez appears to need a refresher course on certain rules of evidence, especially as it relates to hearsay as well as in the area of voir dire.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

It appears as if Judge Martinez is deficient in the rules of evidence and will not read case law when presented with it.

Judge Martinez appears interested in learning things which he does not already know. However, it seems that Judge Martinez is primarily concerned with reaching the right results rather than providing uniform due process rights to all litigants before him.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, it is impossible to write enough about how unpleasant being in front of Judge Martinez is because there is limited space in this text box.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Adam McGinnis

Demeanor –

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis appeared to show a high level of respect for defendants as individual people. He seemed to exhibit a high level of tolerance for defendants who did not understand what was happening or had questions.

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis is patient and courteous to the attorneys and inmates when hearing bond motions.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge McGinnis has acted extremely hostile and snarky to counsel.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Although I rarely see Judge McGinnis since his assignment at the jail, I am always pleasantly surprised at how attentive he is to the PC affidavits, receptive to hearing bond and PC arguments, and how courteous he is to often hostile newly-arrested defendants.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

When I go to the jail for hearings, Judge McGinnis has been quick, efficient and helpful.

Judge McGinnis appears to want to leave court early and rushes through his docket in such a way that arguments from counsel seem to fall on deaf ears.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge McGinnis moves through his docket with such speed and aplomb that often times the State Attorney in front of him cannot keep up because she thinks and writes slower than he does.

Freedom from Bias –

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis is fair and impartial in the way he treats attorneys and their clients.

Judge McGinnis appears to have unconscious race based views that affect his handling of pretrial release hearings. It also appears that Judge McGinnis harbors strong class based blinders which affect his ability to treat all litigants fairly.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis is impartial towards the State and the Defense and just follows the law.

It would appear that Judge McGinnis favors the State over Defense in disposing of pretrial release hearings.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

Judge McGinnis did not appear to place a great deal of significance on the nuances of the law, in my opinion.

It appears that Judge McGinnis does not understand initial appearance rules.

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis understands the law and correctly applies it in Court.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge McGinnis does not appear to have an appropriate level of foundational knowledge regarding the law governing first appearance hearings.

Judge McGinnis's knowledge, particularly of traffic laws is insane.

Overall –

In my opinion, Judge McGinnis only is concerned about how quickly he can get off the bench.

Judge McGinnis appears to be more concerned with finishing court for the day than giving each defendant a meaningful initial appearance hearing.

I believe that Judge McGinnis respects attorneys time and gives fair bond.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Although Judge McGinnis seems to be flourishing handling IAs, I look forward to having him back downtown.

Hon. Wayne Shoemaker

No Comments

Hon. Elizabeth Starr

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Starr is a pleasure to appear in front of in court and she does not keep us waiting.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

Judge Starr frequently breaks hearings up over several day periods for some unknown reason.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Sometimes Judge Starr's history as a State Attorney and Attorney General come through, but not often, more often than not it is her inner New Yorker that takes over, and that background doesn't seem to care if you are the State or the Defense.

Judge Starr seems to be very state-friendly in her rulings.

Overall –

She gives opportunity to be heard while efficiently managing her docket.

Osceola County – County Court Judges - Numerical Results

	Demeanor	Diligence	Freedom from Bias	Impartiality	Legal Knowledge	Overall
Hon. Carol Engel Draper	2.42	4.74	3.72	3.74	4.68	3.05
Hon. Stefania C. Jancewicz	6.25	6.11	7.03	6.03	6.62	6.21
Hon. Heather K. O'Brien	7.03	7.03	7.22	6.59	7.28	6.94

Osceola County – Circuit Court Judges – Comments

Hon. Carol Engel Draper

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I don't know why exactly, but I kind of feel like whatever I write here has likely been said many, many times by many others in many different places well beyond a CFACDL poll. Watching Judge Draper handle pro se defendants' cases (and even defendants' cases that are handled by public defenders) is one of the most depressing parts of going into any courtroom anywhere as a private attorney. It may trump dmV hearings and even many federal sentencing hearings in terms of leaving feeling like you witnessed something extremely unfair take place. Where it becomes most troubling to me, however, is having to watch Judge Draper seemingly berate, threaten, and at times even abuse vulnerable defendants. It is heartbreaking.

Judge Draper appears to be intolerant of attorneys and defendants.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, there is no judge in the Central Florida area that has less patience than Judge Draper. She seems to be angry with everyone and everything happening before her, and seems to take it out on the Defendants who have no idea what they are in for in her courtroom.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

When you enter Judge Draper's courtroom, it feels like you have entered a bottomless black hole where time ceases to be measured by hours, but instead can only be measured by the depths of your sadness while watching how she conducts court.

Judge Draper remands clients into jail faster than anyone else in my opinion.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I can say Judge Draper appears to be equally displeased with almost everyone who appears before her. The only exceptions appearing to be some of the lawyers who are "home towners" in Kissimmee. Then it still appears she is displeased and perhaps generally miserable, but slightly less so. Judge Draper appears to be impatient and to have little time for a defendant (including those who are pro se's) who may not speak English as a first language, who are lower-level intellectual functioning, and/or who suffer from mental deficiency's taking any time to ask questions or to understand the nature of the proceedings or her at times, seemingly coercive plea "offers."

Judge Draper appears to be bias against lower income defendants.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

I believe it likely that Judge Draper knows a great deal about the law; however, it appear that she does not always apply that knowledge to her rulings, and that instead, they often appear motivated by emotion or some other imperative.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Appears that as a county judge, she does not like the job description of a county judge.

Hon. Stefania C. Jancewicz

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Jancewicz appears very standoffish at first, but once you earn credibility in her courtroom she is much more patient and courteous to practice in front of.

Diligence –

It is difficult to conduct business as a modern-day defense attorney without having access to cell phones or even laptops while waiting for Judge Jancewicz to work her way through an often congested (but typical of Osceola County Court) docket. If an attorney is not disrupting court, it would seem that perhaps revising a policy prohibiting lawyers from accessing their electronic devices while awaiting their cases being called in court might be more respectful of private counsels' time.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Although she moves through her docket at a reasonable pace, attorneys in Judge Jancewicz's courtroom waste a TON of time while waiting for cases to get called twiddling their thumbs since they are not permitted to pull out phones/tablets/electronics and do other work like emails, check calendars, etc.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Heather K. O'Brien

Demeanor –

I like Judge O'Brien but her demeanor and tone of voice can seem a bit condescending.

Judge O'Brien is kind and courteous.

Bright with a tendency for form over substance.

Diligence –

It is very nice that Judge O'Brien has procedures in place at PTC that allow attorneys to set cases for pleas without addressing the case before the judge.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Legal Knowledge –

Judge O'Brien is by far the top Judge in Osceola County to argue a complex legal matter or defense in front of, she is on top of new case law and enjoys the legal analyze.

Overall –

Judge O'Brien is a fair and reasonable member of the bench. She allows clients to explain their situation, ask questions, and ensures that the Spanish speaking clients have assistance. She has a heart for the homeless and transients, and is fair to both the defense and prosecution.

Seminole County – Circuit Court Judges - Numerical Results

	<u>Demeanor</u>	<u>Diligence</u>	<u>Freedom from Bias</u>	<u>Impartiality</u>	<u>Legal Knowledge</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Hon. John Harris	6.17	6.8	7.17	7.00	6.40	6.80
Hon. Marlene Alva	5.86	6.15	7.47	6.26	8.11	6.48
Hon. Melanie Chase	7.17	7.00	6.89	6.42	6.39	6.63
Hon. Kenneth Lester, Jr.	8.09	8.17	7.73	7.77	8.00	8.09
Hon. Donna L. McIntosh	7.45	7.50	7.16	6.16	6.83	6.79
Hon. Melissa Souto	6.55	6.17	6.33	6.46	6.08	6.08
Hon. Debra Steinberg Nelson	6.21	6.94	7.47	6.32	7.17	6.95

Seminole County – Circuit Court Judges - Comments

Hon. John Harris

No Comments

Hon. Marlene Alva

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Alva is a good judge, who isn't very patient.

Has become increasingly less tolerant of common courtroom situations.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Takes inordinate amount of time with plea colloquy's, indigent determinations, and other pretrial hearings.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Melanie Chase

Demeanor –

she treats all attorneys and defendants with respect. she listens to the attorneys and the defendants and makes fair rulings.

Pleasant demeanor. Inexperienced.

Diligence –

she is prompt in coming on the bench and expedient in the handling of cases. she always handles cases in a way that helps attorneys go about their business.

Seems to be trying hard to learn.

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Impartiality –

Based on lack of prior experience, appears to believe it's safe to show favoritism towards the State. Seems to favor the government any day of the week.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Seems she needs to take a peak at FL Law Weekly as case law tends to change.

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Kenneth Lester, Jr.

Demeanor –

this judge is always courteous to the attorneys and brings a wealth of practical and legal experience to his courtroom. he is fair to the state and defense.

One of the best judges in the 18th circuit. Runs a tight efficient courtroom.

Diligence –

always on time and the most efficient judge i've ever seen. always considerate of attorneys schedules.

I have yet to meet a judge as efficient as Judge Lester. I have completed a pretrial in two minutes, whereas it would take an hour before many other judges.

Invented the term "rocket docket"

There is not a more efficient Judge.

Hon. Donna L. McIntosh

Demeanor –

it is a pleasure to go into her courtroom because she always treats everyone appropriately. she takes serious consideration of arguments and evidence without ever treating anyone in a rude or demeaning way.

Diligence –

while she gives attorneys ample time to prepare and present information to the court, she also is considerate of attorneys time.

Freedom from Bias –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Melissa Souto

No Comments

Hon. Debra Steinberg Nelson

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Very much in control of her courtroom

Diligence –

always very prompt and expedient in handling cases. very efficient.

Seminole County – County Court Judges - Numerical Results

	<u>Demeanor</u>	<u>Diligence</u>	<u>Freedom from Bias</u>	<u>Impartiality</u>	<u>Legal Knowledge</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Hon. Jerri L. Collins	3.14	5.27	4.82	3.23	4.00	3.30
Hon. James J. DeKleva	8.30	7.32	7.91	7.73	7.00	7.74
Hon. Mark E. Herr	6.54	6.83	7.67	6.58	6.61	6.72
Hon. Debra L. Krause	7.13	6.68	7.00	6.45	5.70	6.00
Hon. John L. Woodard, III	9.18	7.78	8.57	8.65	8.36	7.92

Seminole County – County Court Judges - Comments

Hon. Jerri L. Collins

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

In my opinion, Judge Collins puts the mean in deMEANor.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Diligence –

Giving Judge Collins a 10 for efficiency is not meant as a compliment.

Freedom from Bias –

Judge Collins equally punishes everyone as hard as she can in my experience.

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Appears to not like people accused of a crime.

Impartiality –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Collins seems to get very angry with the State in Court when they do not offer more severe punishments. She seems to be a prosecutor from the bench.

Appears to not have a poker face.

Legal Knowledge –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Overall –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. James J. DeKleva

Demeanor –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Judge Dekleva seems to be the most flexible and accommodating judge in Seminole County.

Hon. Mark E. Herr

Demeanor –

Judge Herr is extremely patient and well-mannered. His courtesy is appreciated on the bench.

Diligence –

[comment deleted pursuant to Rule 4-8.2 of the Florida Rules of Professional Conduct]

Hon. Debra L. Krause

Demeanor –

Judge Krause is very professional yet she reveals a light-hearted spirit that makes her demeanor so much more pleasant.

Hon. John L. Woodward, III

Freedom from bias –

Best Judge on the bench.