

New Trends Report Looks at Present, and Future, of Courts

Courts have a new tool for strategic planning in the *Future Trends in State Courts 2004* report (*Trends Report*), which was published by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in mid-November. This annual report tracks important trends in judicial administration, such as problem-solving courts and court technology, and is compiled and written by NCSC's Knowledge and Information Services Office (KIS), with contributions from judges, consultants, and other NCSC staff.

The *Trends Report* leads with an Environmental Scan that not only takes in courts and court management, but also looks beyond courts at events, trends, and developments from the world in general that could "take the court beyond its current way of doing business."

Developments and issues examined in the Environmental Scan include population decline, the "wireless revolution," challenges to judicial independence, efforts to limit liability, "private justice," and the probable slowing of the decline in crime rates that started in the early 1990s.

The Environmental Scan has been redesigned to be more useful and user friendly, with improved graphics to illustrate events, trends, and developments in courts and the world at large. KIS will maintain and update the Scan online as well.

The Trends articles relate information from the Environmental Scan directly to the courts. For example, David Wexler (University of Arizona) examines the ramifications of therapeutic jurisprudence beyond problem-solving courts and calendars; Ann L. Keith (consultant, KIS) looks at what courts must do to grapple with the controversy surrounding same-sex marriage; Judge Jacqueline Connor (Los Angeles Superior Court) and Anne Endress Skove (KIS) discuss how mass media and pop culture affect jurors' expectations about the justice system; and Don Hardenbergh (Court Works) discusses new trends in courthouse design related to both security and the needs of court "customers."

Updates of previous *Trends Reports* feature a case study of a children's mental health program in Miami (Judge Cindy Lederman), use of the death penalty in juvenile cases (Carol R. Flango), alternative resources for courts in times of tight budgets (Kenneth G. Pankey, Jr.), biometrics (J. Douglas Walker), and data exchanges between courts using JXDD (Tom Clarke). "What to Watch" by Lin Walker looks at the promise of e-courts.

Future Trends in State Courts 2004 is available on NCSC's Web site at www.ncsconline.org. 

2004 Changes in Judicial Salaries Reflect Flat Economy, Says Latest Survey

Salaries of state supreme court justices, appellate judges, trial judges, and state court administrators grew only 1 percent annually, on average, in 2003 and 2004, according to the National Center for State Courts' latest *Survey of Judicial Salaries* (vol. 29, no. 1). This *Survey* provides salary information as of April 1, 2004, and is compiled by NCSC's Knowledge and Information Services Office.

Forty percent of the states reported salary changes for judges or justices, while 50 percent reported changes for state court administrators.

But a judge's or court administrator's true purchasing power depends not only on how much they make, but also on where they live. Therefore, the *Survey* takes local cost of living into account as well. Adjusting "real dollar salaries" to "cost-of-liv-

ing adjusted salaries" yielded some interesting results. For example, trial court judges in the District of Columbia were ranked number 1 in terms of real or nominal salary (\$158,100); however, when adjusted for the cost of living in D.C., that ranking drops to 22 (\$113,946). In contrast, Oklahoma was ranked 44th in terms of real salary (\$95,898), but 31st when salaries were adjusted based on cost of living (\$106,706). The *Survey* also provides real and adjusted salaries for a number of cities of various sizes, including Buffalo, New York; Fresno, California; and Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The results of NCSC's survey of judicial leave policies, conducted during the spring of 2004, are reported in this issue as well. The new *Survey of Judicial Salaries* is available online at www.ncsc.org/D_KIS/Salary_Survey/ (pdf format). 