

# Research Method

This section of the report provides a description of the research method used to conduct the survey, including a description of the populations and samples, questionnaire design, data collection, and data analysis.

## *Populations and Samples*

To gather information that represents the entire state of Minnesota, the Minnesota Supreme Court was interested in obtaining information from adults in each of the 10 Minnesota judicial districts.

The judicial districts used in the statewide sample were defined by county and are as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>Counties Included in the District</b>
District 1	Carver, Dakota, Goodhue, LeSueur, McLeod, Scott, Sibley
District 2	Ramsey
District 3	Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Winona
District 4	Hennepin
District 5	Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Watonwan
District 6	Carlton, Cook, Lake, St. Louis
District 7	Becker, Benton, Clay, Douglas, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Stearns, Todd, Wadena
District 8	Big Stone, Chippewa, Grant, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Meeker, Pope, Renville, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Wilkin, Yellow Medicine
District 9	Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau
District 10	Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Sherburne, Washington, Wright

Anderson-Niebuhr constructed a list of households from each judicial district. From this list, Anderson-Niebuhr drew an equal probability random sample of 100 residents from each judicial district. As a result, every household in a district

had an equal chance of being selected to participate in the survey. Data were weighted to reflect the population distribution in the state so that the findings are representative of the state as a whole.

In addition, a sample of 100 minority residents was also included in the study. Minority residents are defined as those respondents who self-identify as African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino/Latina, or Native American. Native American respondents who live on a reservation were not included in the minority sample; however, they were included in the statewide sample. Census tracts with 30 percent or more minority households were selected in order to generate a list of minority residents in Minnesota. From these census tracts, Anderson-Niebuhr drew a random probability sample of 100 minority residents. As a result, each minority household in the selected census tracts had an equal change of being selected to participate in the survey.

### *Questionnaire Design*

To construct a questionnaire appropriate for the specific research outcomes desired by the Minnesota Supreme Court, Anderson-Niebuhr, along with Minnesota Supreme Court representatives, modified a survey developed by the National Center for State Courts.

The modified questionnaire was pretested with a random sample of five Minnesota adults. Anderson-Niebuhr made recommendations for changes based on the results of the pretest. The questionnaire was revised and finalized in consultation with Minnesota Supreme Court representatives.

*Data  
Collection*

The survey was conducted using Anderson-Niebuhr's established telephone survey methods. Data collection occurred from February 26 through April 28, 1999. In total, 1,100 surveys were completed with Minnesota residents. The overall response rate for the study was 71 percent.

*Data  
Analysis*

Each completed questionnaire was reviewed for completeness and consistency before being transferred to magnetic media for computer analysis. All transfer of data was verified. Additional analysis was performed in the summer of 2000 to confirm findings. Anderson-Niebuhr defined analyses to be performed in consultation with Supreme Court representatives. Anderson-Niebuhr's on-site computer facilities and computer programs contained in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/Windows) were used to conduct the analyses.

Complete descriptive summaries are presented in graphics and tables found in the "Summary of Overall Findings" section of this report. In addition, statistical comparisons were conducted to identify differences between the following:

- ◆ Caucasian respondents and respondents of all other races
- ◆ Metro, out-state urban, and rural respondents
- ◆ Respondents with court experience, jury experience, and any other type of court experience

In addition, descriptive information for key questions was calculated and graphed based on gender, age, education level, and income. Statistical comparisons were also calculated to identify significant differences based on these demographic factors. Results are found in the "Demographically Stratified Findings" section of this report.