

State *of the* State Courts

// 2022 POLL



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J. MacDonald**
New Hampshire



Molly Justice
NCSC



Jesse Rutledge
NCSC

// METHODOLOGY



What: NCSC Online Survey

When: October 22-25, 2022

Who: Conducted by GBAO Strategies

Polled: 1,000 Registered Voters

Stats: MOE +/- 3.1% (19 times out 20)

// KEY FINDINGS



Public trust measures continue to slide. If courts wish to remain the most trusted branch of government, this slide must be halted.



Equal justice for all? **Americans are losing faith** in the courts ability to deliver on this key promise. On this measure, the gulf between white and people of color is wide.



There are **positive messages** that help distinguish the critical role of the state courts. Courts must adopt these messages, while emphasizing how courts are accountable to the law.



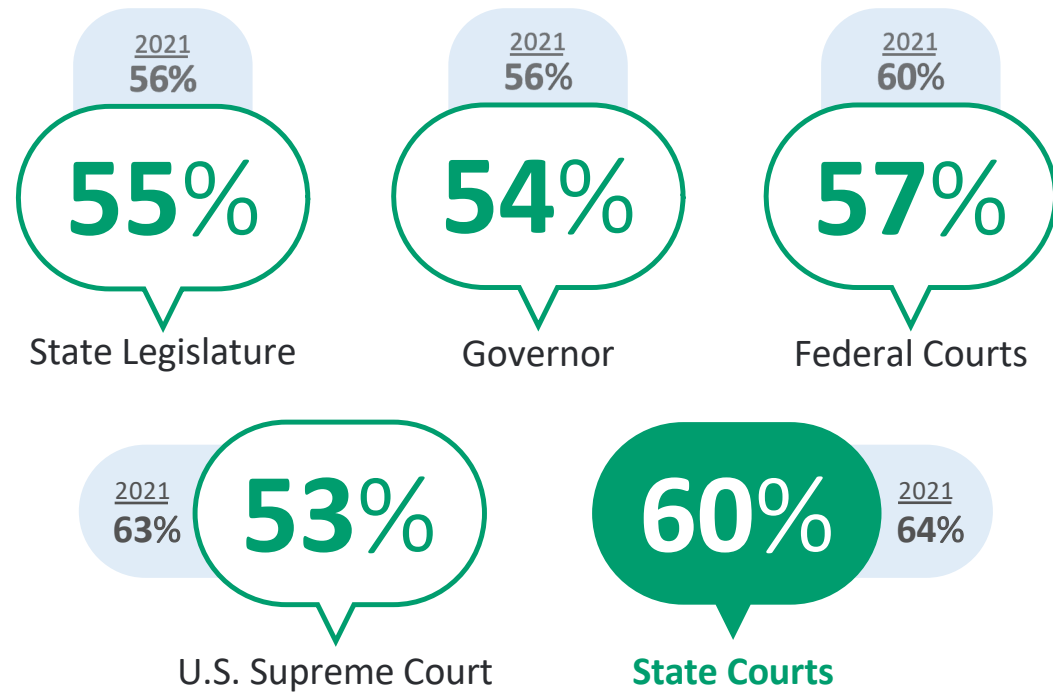
There is overwhelming public support for **courts to lead on America's mental health crisis.**

// FIGURE 1

The slide in public confidence in courts continues.

Q: “How much confidence do you have in each institution?”

Percent saying they have either a great deal of confidence or some confidence



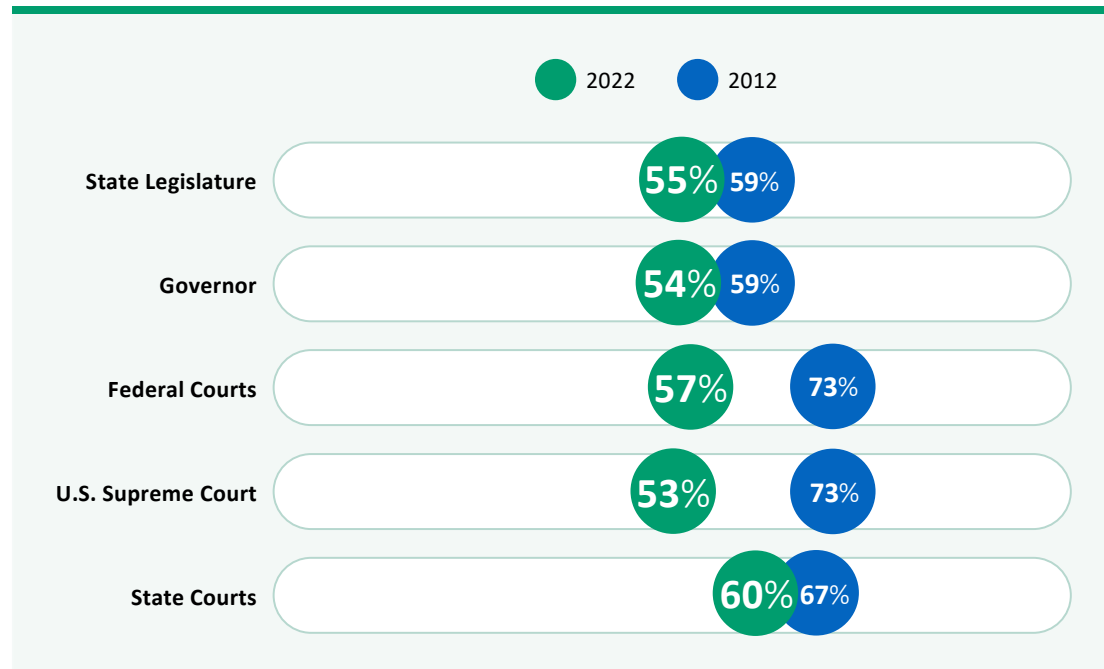
// FIGURE 2

Most trusted?
Yes.

Too close for
comfort?
Also yes.

Q: “How much confidence do you have in each institution?”

Percent saying they have either a great deal of confidence or some confidence

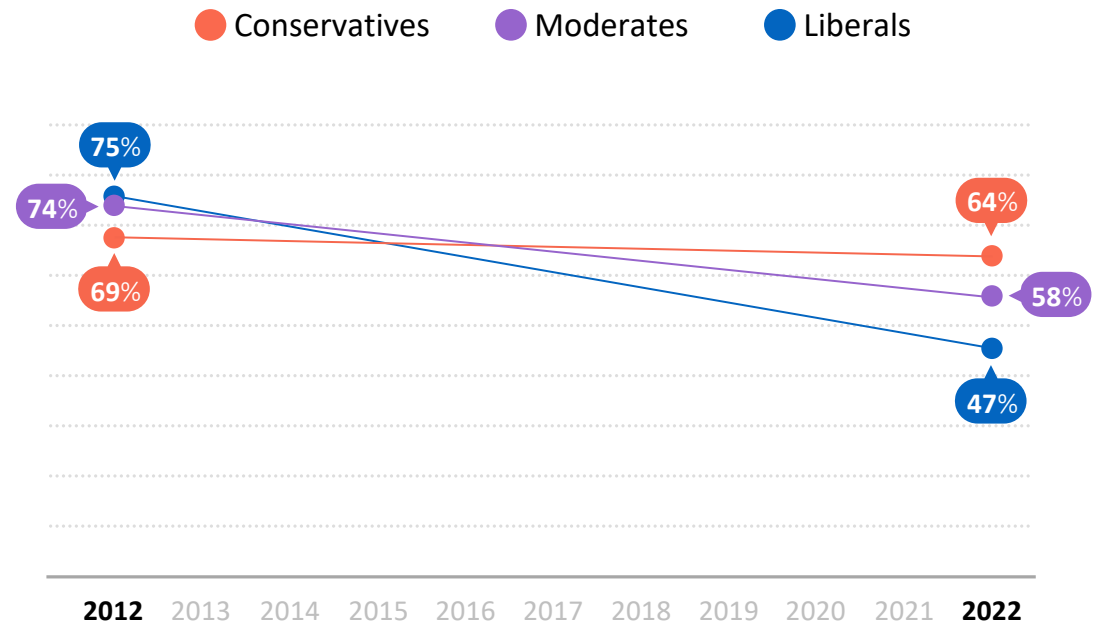


// FIGURE 3

Liberal and moderate voters, who once held the topline number up, are now dragging it down.

Q: “How much confidence do you have in each institution?”

Percent saying they have either a great deal of confidence or some confidence

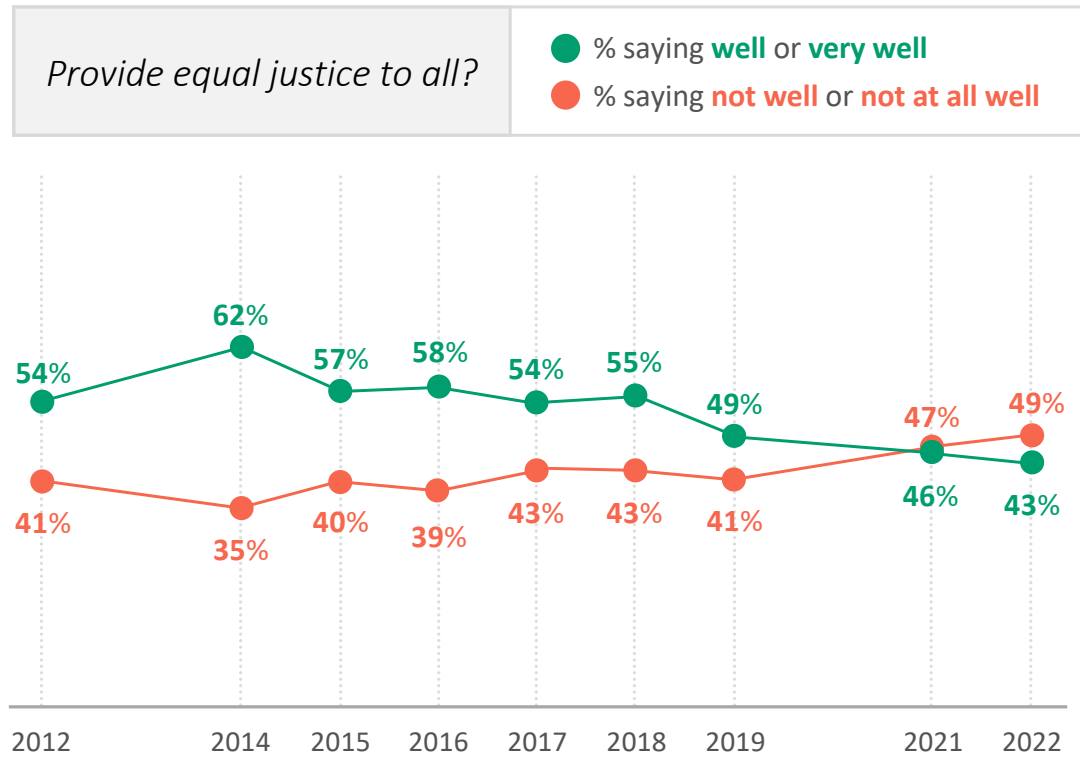


Figures reflect average response of state courts, federal courts, and U.S. Supreme Court

// FIGURE 4

Americans are now questioning whether courts deliver equal justice for all.

Q: “Does the following word or phrase describe [state] courts very well, well, not very well, or not well at all?”



// FIGURE 5

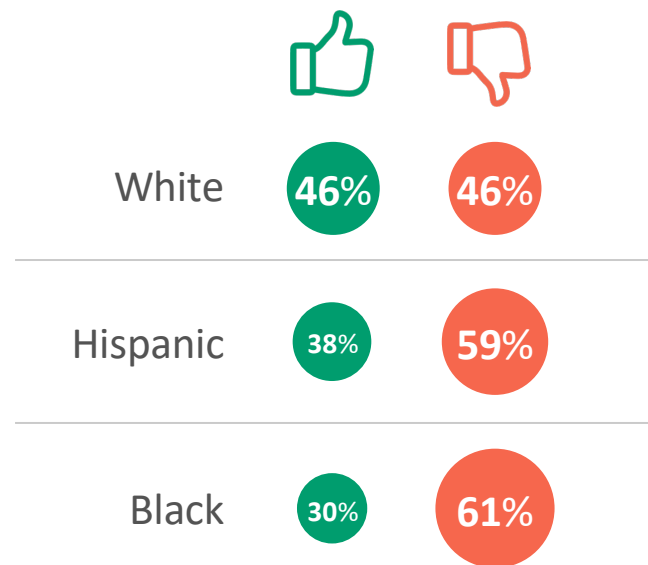
On perceptions of equal justice, the gulf between white and people of color is wide.

Q: “Does the following word or phrase describe [state] courts very well, well, not very well, or not well at all?”

Provide equal justice to all?

● % saying **well** or **very well**

● % saying **not well** or **not at all well**

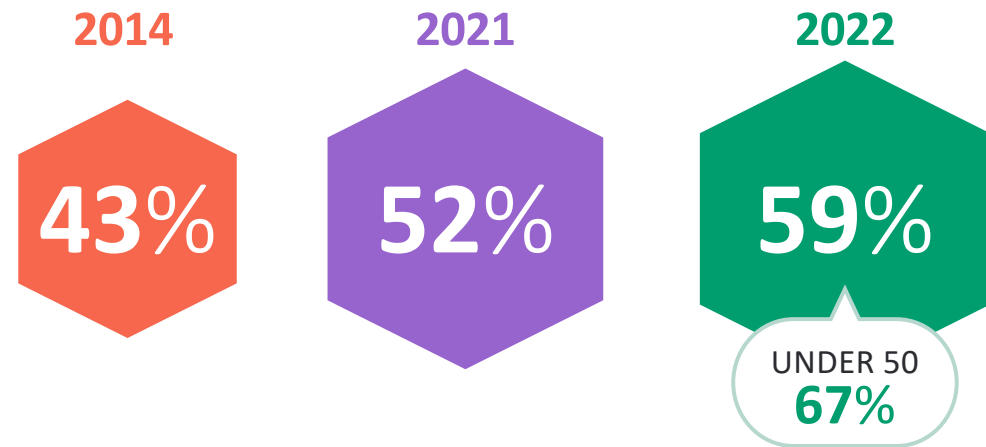


// FIGURE 6

Comfort levels
with remote court
appearances are
on the rise.

Q: “If you had business with the courts and this service was available online via videoconferencing...would you use it?”

*Percent saying they would **definitely** or **probably** use video to appear for a case before the court.*



// FIGURE 7

Let's remind people of the reasons that state courts are different—in a positive way.

Q: “Below are some statements about the role of the state courts in our country's judicial system. Please tell me how effective each statement is in explaining the role of the state courts and why they are important for people like you.”

Local is Better.

Legal disputes should be decided by the courts closest to the communities that are involved.

History Matters.

Virtually all our liberties originated in the states, which makes state courts and state constitutions so important.

Supporting Facts that Resonate:

More than **95% of all cases in the U.S.** are filed in state courts.

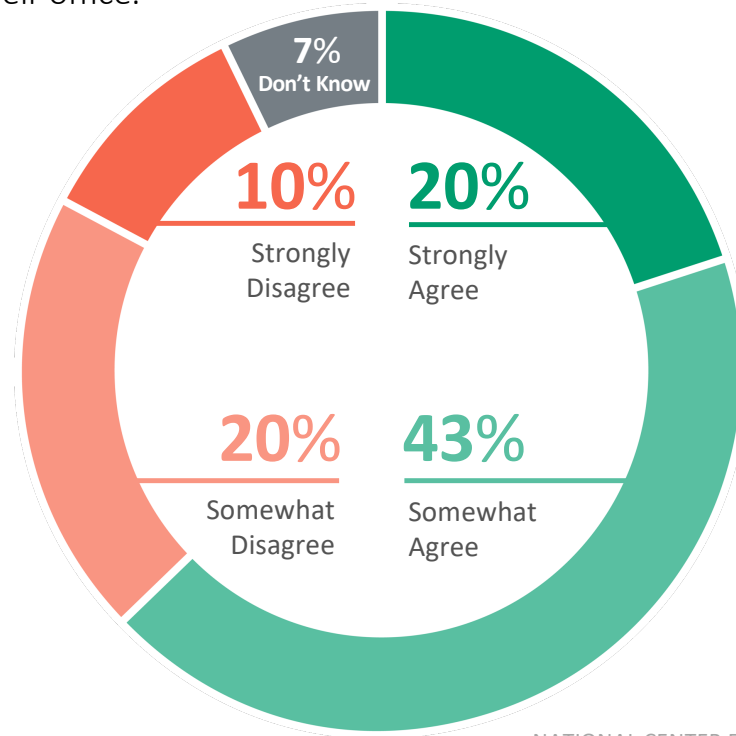
State courts **hear over 100 million cases** every year.

// FIGURE 8

Close to two-thirds agree that our system already does a good job of holding judges accountable.

Q: “Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?”

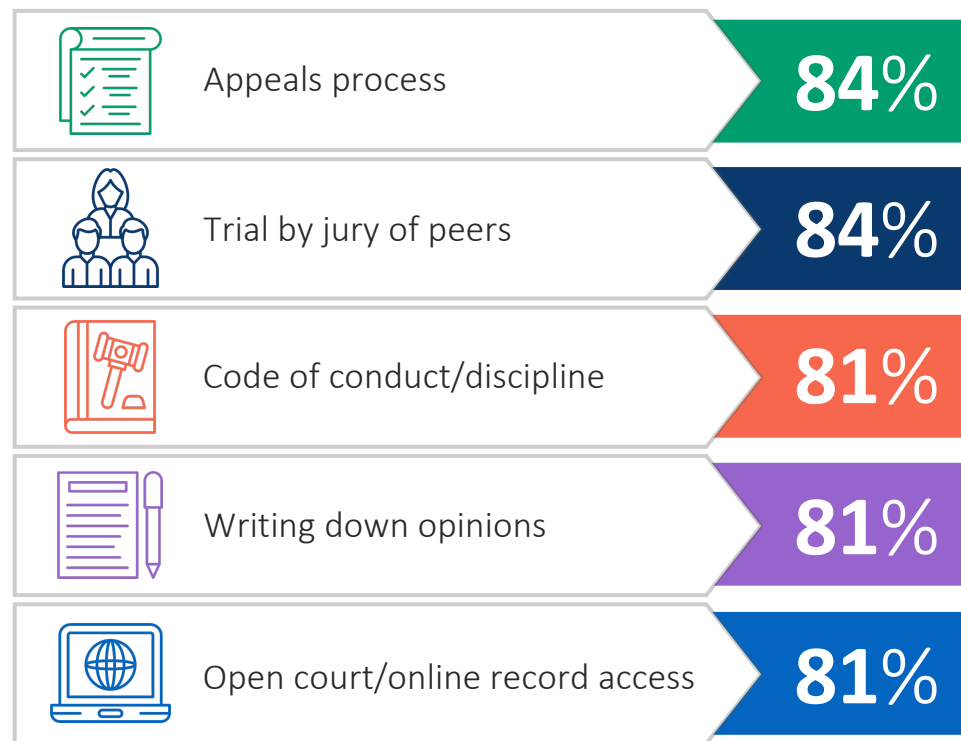
Judges are expected to make rulings based on the Constitution, the law, and the facts of each individual case, and our judicial system does a good job of holding them accountable and ensuring they do not abuse the power of their office.”



// FIGURE 9

Voters embrace existing accountability mechanisms.

Q: “Please indicate whether you believe each of the following policies would be effective in ensuring courts and judges only make decisions based on the Constitution, the law, and the facts of each case.”

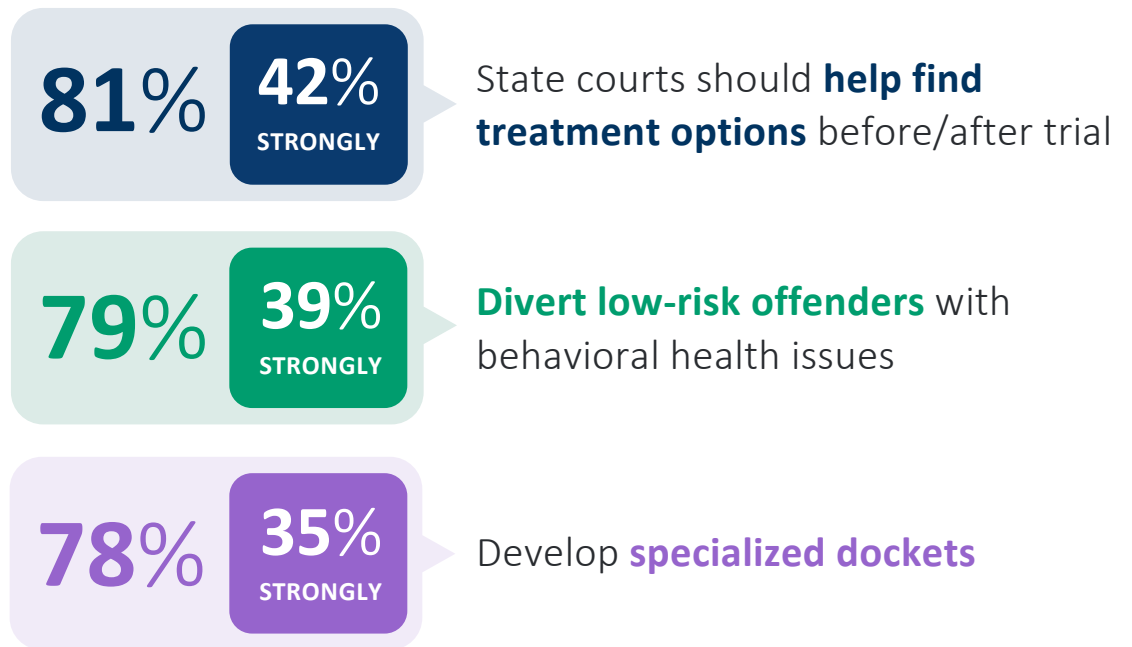


// FIGURE 10

There is overwhelming public support for courts doing more on behavioral health.

Q: “Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each.”

Percentage saying they agree



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For more information, visit:
ncsc.org/survey