

NORTH CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION

seeking liberty + justice

NCBA Judicial Independence Symposium Polling Results

Polling Performed by Cygnal

Likely Voter Polling: May 9 – 10, 2022 | n=630 | ±3.85%

Attorney Polling: May 16 – 17, 2022 | n=853 | ±3.30%

TRUST IN FEDERAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

United States Judicial Branch led by United States Supreme Court

Please indicate how much trust you have in the Judiciary Branch of the U.S. Government which is led by the Supreme Court of the United States.		Voters	Attorneys
	A great deal	15.2%	21.4%
A fair amount	32.9%	43.2%	
Not very much	33.4%	28.3%	
None at all	17.5%	7%	
No opinion	1.1%	.1%	

United States Congress

Please indicate how much trust you have in the Legislative Branch of the U.S. government also known as the United States Congress		Voters	Attorneys
	A great deal	4.8%	1.6%
A fair amount	17.4%	20.2%	
Not very much	45.2%	60.1%	
None at all	31.1%	17.8%	
No opinion	1.6%	.3%	

Executive Branch led by the President of the United States

Please indicate how much trust you have in the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government which is made up of the President and his/her Cabinet and Administration.		Voters	Attorneys
	A great deal	14.2%	13.4%
A fair amount	23.7%	40.6%	
Not very much	19.9%	29.8%	
None at all	41.0%	15.9%	
No opinion	1.2%	.3%	

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TRUST IN NORTH CAROLINA COURTS

North Carolina Appellate Courts

Please indicate how much trust you have in North Carolina's Appellate Courts.		Voters	Attorneys
	A great deal	7.6%	19.6%
	A fair amount	43.6%	58.9%
	Not very much	30.8%	16.2%
	None at all	8.9%	2.5%
	No opinion	9.1%	2.8%

North Carolina Trial Courts

Please indicate how much trust you have in North Carolina's Trial Courts.		Voters	Attorneys
	A great deal	7.8%	29.6%
	A fair amount	44.1%	52.3%
	Not very much	31%	13.8%
	None at all	8.1%	1.7%
	No opinion	9.1%	2.7%

JUDICIAL SELECTION

Appointment vs. Election of Judges

Should state judges be appointed by the state government or elected by the voters?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Appointed by the state government</u>	<u>11.7%</u>	<u>37.1%</u>
<i>Definitely appointed by the state government</i>	4.2%	11.7%
<i>Probably appointed by the state government</i>	7.4%	25.4%
<u>Elected by the Voters</u>	<u>80.4%</u>	<u>52.2%</u>
<i>Probably elected by the voters</i>	26.8%	25.1%
<i>Definitely elected by the voters</i>	53.6%	27.1%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>7.9%</u>	<u>10.7%</u>

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Elections: Partisan vs. Nonpartisan

If state judges were to be elected by the voters, should the elections be partisan, meaning the judge would run as part of a political party such as Republican or Democrat, OR should they be nonpartisan, meaning the judge would run without the official backing of a political party?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Partisan</u>	<u>23.1%</u>	<u>21.7%</u>
<i>Definitely partisan</i>	16.8%	11.4%
<i>Probably partisan</i>	6.3%	10.3%
<u>Nonpartisan</u>	<u>70.9%</u>	<u>75.6%</u>
<i>Probably nonpartisan</i>	12.0%	12.7%
<i>Definitely nonpartisan</i>	58.9%	62.9%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>6.0%</u>	<u>2.7%</u>

Appointment of Judges: Governor or General Assembly

If state judges were to be appointed and either the Governor or the North Carolina General Assembly could appoint them, which would you prefer?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Governor</u>	<u>22.6%</u>	<u>47.8%</u>
<i>Definitely the Governor</i>	9.9%	18.1%
<i>Probably the Governor</i>	12.6%	29.6%
<u>General Assembly</u>	<u>52.1%</u>	<u>32.3%</u>
<i>Definitely the General Assembly</i>	25.4%	13.3%
<i>Probably the General Assembly</i>	26.7%	19.0%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>25.3%</u>	<u>19.9%</u>

Appointment of Judges: Governor, General Assembly or Nonpartisan Commission

If state judges were to be appointed and either the Governor, the North Carolina General Assembly, or a nonpartisan commission could appoint them, which would you prefer?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Governor</u>	<u>7.9%</u>	<u>9.8%</u>
<i>Definitely the Governor</i>	3.6%	2.9%
<i>Probably the Governor</i>	4.3%	6.9%
<u>General Assembly</u>	<u>17.0%</u>	<u>14.4%</u>
<i>Definitely the General Assembly</i>	9.6%	7.4%
<i>Probably the General Assembly</i>	7.5%	7.1%
<u>Nonpartisan Commission</u>	<u>63.1%</u>	<u>71.0%</u>
<i>Definitely the Nonpartisan Commission</i>	36.9%	45.5%
<i>Probably the Nonpartisan Commission</i>	26.2%	25.5%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>12.0%</u>	<u>4.7%</u>

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SPEED OF JUSTICE

Do you think North Carolina's court system operates too slowly, at about the right speed, or too fast?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Too slowly</u>	<u>60.6%</u>	<u>65.5%</u>
<i>Much too slowly</i>	31.1%	24.6%
<i>Somewhat too slowly</i>	29.5%	40.9%
<u>About the right speed</u>	<u>12.6%</u>	<u>25.8%</u>
<u>Too fast</u>	<u>1.4%</u>	<u>0.7%</u>
<i>Somewhat too fast</i>	0.6%	0.4%
<i>Much too fast</i>	0.8%	0.4%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>25.5%</u>	<u>8.0%</u>

NUMBER OF TRIAL JUDGES

Right now, there is one trial judge for every 27,632 citizens in North Carolina. Do you think North Carolina's court system has enough judges?

	Voters	Attorneys
<u>Enough</u>	<u>15.1%</u>	<u>27.0%</u>
<i>Definitely enough</i>	4.5%	5.9%
<i>Probably enough</i>	10.5%	21.1%
<u>Not Enough</u>	<u>69.2%</u>	<u>63.8%</u>
<i>Probably not enough</i>	36.9%	32.4%
<i>Definitely not enough</i>	32.3%	31.5%
<u>Unsure</u>	<u>15.7%</u>	<u>9.1%</u>

POLITICAL PARTIES INFLUENCE ON JUDGES

How much influence do you think political parties in North Carolina have over North Carolina's judges?

	Voters	Attorneys
A great deal	34.7%	32.7%
A fair amount	39.5%	42.1%
Not very much	8.5%	18.9%
None at all	4.0%	1.7%
Unsure	13.3%	4.5%

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FAIRNESS

Court Outcome Fairness

In general, do you think North Carolina courts' outcomes are fair or unfair?

	Voters	Attorneys
Fair	31%	65.3%
<i>Very fair</i>	7.4%	14.3%
<i>Somewhat fair</i>	23.6%	51.0%
<u>Neither fair nor unfair</u>	12.4%	10.6%
Unfair	27.6%	14.5%
<i>Somewhat unfair</i>	19.7%	11.7%
<i>Very unfair</i>	7.9%	2.8%
Unsure	29%	9.5%

Wealth Impact on Fairness

In general, how much of an impact does a defendant's wealth and social status have on a court outcome in North Carolina?

	Voters	Attorneys
A great deal	51.5%	36.4%
A fair amount	25.4%	37.6%
Not very much	7.1%	16.7%
None at all	3%	3.5%
Unsure	12.9%	5.9%

Race Impact on Fairness

In general, how much of an impact does a defendant's race have on a court outcome in North Carolina?

	Voters	Attorneys
A great deal	38.6%	21.8%
A fair amount	22.7%	35.3%
Not very much	14.2%	25.7%
None at all	11.6%	10.3%
Unsure	12.9%	7%