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ANNOTATION

DESIGN: The study looks at three North Carolina counties that have implemented mediation for related-party misdemeanor cases. Domestic violence cases are excluded from eligibility. Each county is matched with a similar county. The study focused on the impact of mediation programs on the court process and the experiences of the participants.

REASONS: Of the 1,421 clusters (victims/offender and incidents) deemed eligible for mediation, 58% actually went through mediation. Complainants not wanting to participate was the major reason for lack of mediation.

RESTITUTION: Of those mediated, over ninety percent reached agreement. Estimations of compliance by complainants and defendants ranged from 84% to 98%.

SATISFACTION: Both complainants and defendants were highly satisfied with the process and outcome of mediation. Even some six to ten months after mediation, seventy-five percent of the complainants and 70% of the defendants reported that mediation had solved their problems.

RECIDIVISM: While not statistically significant, defendants with mediated agreements were less likely to have new charges within the first 120 days than their counterparts who did not have such agreement.

DIVERSION AND COST: In two counties, mediation did not have an impact on diverting offenders from the court; in a third county, Henderson, significant impact was identified. The authors state: "The Henderson program's effect on trials was impressive; it may have reduced trials by as much as two-thirds."

KEYWORDS:  
VOM  
ADULT  
MISDEMEANOR  
REASONS, SATISFACTION, RECIDIVISM, DIVERSION, COST  
VICTIM DATA, OFFENDER DATA  
SURVEY, RECORD DATA, COMPARISON  
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