

IRENE TAKAHASHI, ESQ.



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PROFILE

Irene Takahashi is widely recognized as one of the Bay Area's leading mediators. Building on a solid foundation of trial experience, she adds the insights gained while serving as a trial judge. She has tried scores of criminal and civil cases both bench and jury. She has wide experience in a range of civil disputes, involving, among others, personal injury, employment, landlord-tenant, and public and private entity liability.

Beyond her widely acknowledged legal acumen, she has a deserved reputation for being able to identify and facilitate the resolution of the complex personal concerns that often form the most formidable barriers to settlements. Rather than practicing a set pattern of mediation, she has a style that allows her to 'shift gears' as conditions develop and as unforeseen difficulties arise. Her adaptability gives the parties the maximum opportunity for resolution. As one attorney put it, "Irene's perceptive instincts made the difference."

Mediations can be costly and stressful; Ms. Takahashi is known to work to minimize both those issues. She knows most cases resolve. She is persistent and works with the parties before, during and with follow-up to provide a successful resolution tailored to the individual case.

Ms. Takahashi, as reported by many attorneys, is a wise, empathetic, approachable and hard-working mediator. Both litigants and litigators agree that she listens carefully, demonstrates human concern with a dignity that inspires confidence, and provides legal and practical guidance of substantial value. As a result, many counsel have sought her help on multiple cases. Consistently she facilitates prompt, fair and lasting resolutions in the most difficult mediations.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Personal Injury: slip and fall, automobile and motorcycle accidents, pedestrian accidents, catastrophic injuries, wrongful death, sexual assault, PTSD

Product Liability

Employment/ Title IX

Sexual Misconduct

Landlord-Tenant: commercial and residential / COVID-19

Property Liability and Damages: fires, floods, crimes committed on property

Professional Liability/ Errors & Omissions

Public and Private Entity Liability: school districts, churches, private and public organizations, and government institutions

Business Litigation/ Breach of Contract

Eminent Domain

EDUCATION

University of California at Berkeley: Bachelor of Arts (1973)

University of California at Davis, School of Law: Juris Doctor (1976)

Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution (2015)

Mediation Training, Mediation Offices of Steve Rosenberg (2017)

CAREER HISTORY

2017 - Present Mediator/Arbitrator at ADR Services, Inc.

2001 – 2016 Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith – Partner

1998 – 2000 Santochi Gable Dwyer & Takahashi – Managing Partner

1996 – 1998 McLemore Collins & Toschi – Partner

1991 – 1996 Kincaid Gianunzio Caudle & Hubert – Senior Associate

1989 – 1991 Contra Costa County Superior Court – Judge
Presided over civil and criminal cases, Law & Motion, settlement conferences, case management, community forums, and educational outreach to youth, women, and people of color

1982 – 1989 County of Contra Costa – Deputy District Attorney

1980 – 1982 Alameda County court-appointed criminal representation of juveniles

1978 – 1980 United States Department of Justice – Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California - prosecution of federal criminal offenses, and argued appeals before the United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

1976 – 1978 County of Alameda – Deputy District Attorney

RECENT SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS/ACTIVITIES

“Masters of Dispute Resolution Podcast”, Guest (2025)

Seventeenth Annual Intraschool Negotiations Competition, Judge (2025)

“Reading the Room-Irene Takahashi has a knack for putting all parties at ease”, Daily Journal (2024)

“What’s in a Mediator’s Toolbox”, Continuing Education of the Bar (2024)

“Barristers Litigation Summit”, Bar Association of San Francisco (2022)

“So You Want to Be a Neutral,” ADR Services, Inc. (2021)

“Negotiations in Employment Cases,” California Employment Lawyers Association (2021)

“Negotiation Techniques for Women,” Bay Area Women Lawyers (2021)

“Tell Me Something I Don’t Know About Elimination of Bias,” ADR Services, Inc. MCLE Day (2021)