

HON. RAUL RAMIREZ (RET.)

Mediator

ADR SERVICES, INC.

For more than five decades, Hon. Raul A. Ramirez (Ret.), who has been recognized by the *Daily Journal* as one of the **Top 50 Neutrals in California,** has approached disputes from virtually every vantage point: as a trial lawyer, State Court Judge, United States District Judge, Appellate Judge by designation to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, complex litigation partner, private judge, arbitrator, and mediator. Since leaving the federal bench in 1990, Judge Ramirez has devoted his practice principally to dispute resolution, with particular depth in employment, wage and hour, civil rights and excessive-force matters, personal injury and wrongful death, insurance, professional liability, and complex business disputes.

Across four different courts and approximately 35 years of mediation practice, he has mediated over 3,000 cases. His broader career as a civil litigator, jurist, and private judge has involved more than 3,000 injury trials, settlement conferences, and mediations. His resolution experience includes matters ranging from individual employment and personal injury claims to multimillion-dollar civil rights disputes, wage and hour matters, complex commercial claims, insurance disputes, class actions, and cases involving public entities.

Judge Ramirez has mediated numerous high-stakes civil rights matters involving allegations of police brutality, excessive force, custodial injury, failure to provide medical care, wrongful death, and other constitutional claims. His experience includes disputes involving law enforcement agencies, public entities, incarcerated individuals, and catastrophic personal injuries, as well as the widely reported UC Davis “pepper-spray” matter. These cases often involve substantial exposure, complex factual records, emotionally charged allegations, and significant institutional concerns.

Judge Ramirez has substantial experience mediating employment disputes involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, disability and accommodation, FMLA, wage and hour claims, and other workplace issues. His persistence is a defining feature of his practice: in one wage and hour matter that did not resolve during the scheduled mediation, he continued working with the parties for approximately two months and through 23 follow-up telephone calls before helping them reach settlement. His broader employment experience includes complex disability discrimination, sexual assault, and wage and hour matters involving significant legal, factual, and economic stakes.

That persistence is central to Judge Ramirez’s mediation philosophy. He does not regard the end of a scheduled mediation session as the end of the process. He follows up with counsel, continues negotiations when productive, and remains engaged until a case resolves or the parties determine that further efforts would not be useful. Attorneys who have worked with him would, in his view, describe him as “prepared, knowledgeable, persistent and dedicated to get it done no matter how long it takes.”

Judge Ramirez combines that persistence with a distinctly practical style. He describes himself as a “street lawyer,” someone who relies on common sense, listens carefully, understands what litigation

means to the people actually experiencing it, and can communicate effectively with attorneys and clients alike. He believes litigants need to be heard and treated with dignity, including when he ultimately disagrees with their position. That ability to establish credibility with the person in the room, not simply counsel, is an important component of his approach to resolution.

When negotiations stall, however, Judge Ramirez is comfortable becoming more evaluative. Depending on the case, he may use brackets, a mediator's proposal, focused reality testing, or a candid assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a party's position. His guiding philosophy is straightforward: remain honest with both sides, never talk down to participants, and do not give up simply because resolution becomes difficult.

His career also carries historic distinction. Judge Ramirez was the first Hispanic appointed to the United States District Court in California, the youngest judge appointed to the Sacramento Municipal Court, and the youngest judge appointed to the Federal District Court. He later assisted in the creation of the Ninth Circuit's early appellate settlement program and was nominated as a leading settlement judge at both the state and federal levels. In recognition of his exceptional work as a mediator, the Daily Journal named him one of California's Top 50 Neutrals.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Employment
Wrongful Termination • Wage & Hour • Discrimination • Sexual Harassment • Retaliation • Disability Discrimination • Failure to Accommodate • Age Discrimination • FMLA/Leave Claims

Civil Rights
42 U.S.C. § 1983 • Excessive Force • Police Misconduct • Officer-Involved Shootings • Custodial Death • Failure To Provide Medical Care • Jail and Prison Claims • Constitutional Claims

Personal Injury & Wrongful Death
Catastrophic Injury • Wrongful Death • Sexual Abuse/Assault • Automobile Liability • Public Entity Liability • Institutional Negligence

Business & Commercial
Complex Commercial Disputes • Breach of Contract • Partnership Disputes • Business Torts • Class Actions

Additional Experience
Insurance Coverage • Professional Malpractice • Habitability • Environmental/CEQA Matters • UIM Matters

Judge Ramirez has provided ADR services throughout California and in Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, Washington, Louisiana, and New Mexico.

WHY ATTORNEYS SELECT JUDGE RAMIREZ

- **Approximately 35 years of mediation experience and over 3,000 cases.** His dispute-resolution experience spans four courts and decades of private ADR practice.

- **Rare state and federal judicial perspective.** Judge Ramirez served on the Sacramento Municipal/Superior Court and for a decade as a United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California, with service by designation on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

- **Deep civil rights and excessive-force expertise.** His background includes both high-profile criminal litigation and extensive mediation of § 1983, police misconduct, custodial medical care, officer-involved shooting, and excessive-force matters. He identifies this combination as particularly valuable in understanding the factual and human dynamics of civil rights disputes.

- **Substantial employment experience.** Judge Ramirez has resolved discrimination, harassment, retaliation, disability, leave, and wage and hour disputes, and has served as a faculty member and chair of the national employment law institute.

- **Persistence beyond the mediation hearing.** His six-figure wage-and-hour resolution following two months and 23 post-session telephone calls illustrates his willingness to remain engaged when a case has not settled by the end of the scheduled session.

- **Direct without being dismissive.** Judge Ramirez believes in candidly evaluating difficult positions while treating attorneys and litigants with dignity and respect.

- **Practical communication with decision-makers and litigants.** His down-to-earth style is designed to make the mediation process understandable and productive for the clients whose decisions ultimately determine whether a case resolves.

MEDIATION APPROACH

Preparation before the mediation.
Judge Ramirez believes meaningful settlement work begins before the mediation session. He conducts a pre-mediation conference call to establish briefing dates, identify issues and concerns that could affect negotiations, and begin focusing counsel on the prospects and requirements of settlement.

Building trust and listening.
Judge Ramirez places particular emphasis on listening—not simply to counsel's legal arguments, but to the parties themselves. He recognizes that litigation can be intimidating and deeply consequential for individual litigants. His objective is to ensure participants understand that they have been heard and treated with dignity, while maintaining the neutrality and candor necessary for meaningful negotiation.

Candid evaluation.
When appropriate, Judge Ramirez provides a straightforward assessment of the risks facing each side. His approach is evaluative without being demeaning: parties may need to hear that their position faces serious obstacles, but he believes those conversations are most effective when delivered respectfully and after credibility has been established.

Breaking impasse.
When negotiations stall, Judge Ramirez may employ brackets, mediator's proposals, continued offer-and-counteroffer discussions, and direct reality testing. If other techniques fail, he is willing to provide a blunt assessment of the likely success—or lack of success—of a position.

Persistence after the session.
Judge Ramirez's involvement frequently does not end when the parties leave the mediation. He follows up with counsel and continues working the negotiation when he believes resolution remains possible. As he puts it, he keeps calling until the matter settles or the parties tell him to stop.

PROFESSIONAL & JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

Mediator, Arbitrator, and Private Judge **1990-Present**
Focused on employment, civil rights, insurance coverage, personal injury and wrongful death, professional malpractice, and complex business/commercial disputes.

Senior Litigation Partner; Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP **1990-1996**
Complex litigation and ADR, including service as court-appointed settlement master, mediator, private settlement conference judge, and neutral and party arbitrator.

Judge; United States District Court, Eastern District of California **1980-1990**
Also served as an Appellate Judge by designation to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Judge; Municipal/Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento **1977-1980**

Trial Attorney **1970-1977**
Represented clients in tort litigation and major criminal matters in state and federal court, including appellate proceedings before California courts of appeal and the California supreme court.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & ACTIVITIES

Judge Ramirez has lectured extensively on trial practice, federal procedure, employment law, mediation, and ADR for bar associations, trial lawyer organizations, educational institutions, and professional organizations.

Selected activities include:

- Faculty Member and Chair, National Employment Law Institute
- Board of Advisors and Faculty Member, Orientation In American Law Program, UC Davis
- Author/Speaker, "The Nuts and Bolts of Federal Trial Practice," Federal Bar Association
- Speaker, Equal Employment Advisory Council
- Presenter, "Employment Discrimination Actions," Sacramento City Attorney's Office
- Speaker/Panelist, "Mediation – Timing, Tactics, Effective Approaches To Settlement"
- Speaker/Panelist, "Alternative Dispute Resolution In Environmental Matters"
- Mock Trial Judge, University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law, UC Davis, and Martin Luther King School of Law

EDUCATION

- LL.B, University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, 1970
- B.A., California State University, Los Angeles, 1967

COURT ADMISSIONS

- United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- United States District Courts, Northern, Central, Eastern, and Southern Districts of California
- California Supreme Court

HONORS & DISTINCTIONS

- First Hispanic appointed to the United States District Court in California
- Youngest judge appointed to the Sacramento Municipal Court
- Youngest judge appointed to the United States District Court
- Distinguished Service Award, Sacramento City Council Police Practices Committee
- Assisted in developing the first appellate settlement program for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals
- "Top 50 Neutrals", Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journal

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What types of cases does Judge Raul Ramirez mediate?
Judge Ramirez mediates employment, wage and hour, civil rights, excessive-force and police misconduct, personal injury, wrongful death, insurance, professional liability, and complex business and commercial disputes. He has particular depth in employment and § 1983 civil rights cases and has mediated matters involving officer-involved shootings, custodial deaths, failure to provide medical treatment, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, disability accommodation, and wage and hour claims.

How much mediation experience does Judge Ramirez have?
Judge Ramirez has 35 years of mediation experience and over 3,000 mediated matters across four courts and his private ADR practice. His overall career as a civil litigator, judge, and private neutral has involved thousands of trials, settlement conferences, and mediations.

What is Judge Ramirez's mediation style?
Judge Ramirez's style combines preparation, active listening, persistence, practical problem-solving, and candid evaluation. He works to establish trust with attorneys and clients before challenging positions, and he believes parties should be treated with dignity even when he disagrees with their assessment of the case. When appropriate, he will directly address weaknesses and litigation risk.

Does Judge Ramirez have experience mediating civil rights and excessive-force cases?
Yes. Civil rights and excessive-force disputes are among Judge Ramirez's principal areas of expertise. His representative mediations include § 1983 claims involving police shootings, excessive force, custodial

medical care, inmate treatment, arrest and detention, police canine use, and alleged police brutality. Representative settlements have ranged into the multimillion-dollar range, including reported resolutions of $8.3 million, $6.7 million, $5.8 million, and $3.7 million.

Does Judge Ramirez mediate employment and wage and hour cases?
Yes. Civil rights and excessive-force disputes are among Judge Ramirez's principal areas of expertise. He has mediated significant matters involving police shootings, excessive force, custodial medical care, inmate treatment, arrest and detention, police canine use, wrongful death, and alleged police misconduct. His experience includes complex, high-exposure disputes involving public entities and law enforcement agencies.

How does Judge Ramirez handle an impasse?
Judge Ramirez may use brackets, mediator's proposals, continued negotiation, and direct reality testing to restart stalled discussions. When necessary, he is prepared to give counsel and parties a candid assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, and practical risks associated with their positions.

Does Judge Ramirez follow up after mediation?
Yes. Persistent post-mediation follow-up is a defining feature of Judge Ramirez's practice. If a case does not resolve during the mediation session but he believes settlement remains achievable, he continues working with counsel to keep negotiations moving. In one wage and hour matter, Judge Ramirez remained actively engaged with the parties well beyond the mediation session, ultimately helping them reach a resolution.

How does Judge Ramirez's judicial experience benefit parties in mediation?
Judge Ramirez served at both the state and federal levels, including ten years as a United States District Judge and service by designation on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. That experience gives him a practical perspective on trial procedure, evidentiary and litigation risk, judicial decision-making, and the uncertainties parties face if a dispute does not settle.

Why might attorneys select Judge Ramirez for a difficult or emotionally charged case?
Judge Ramirez combines extensive trial and judicial experience with a down-to-earth communication style. He places particular importance on making litigants feel heard and respected while remaining willing to have difficult conversations about the merits of their positions. His experience in civil rights, personal injury, wrongful death, harassment, discrimination, and other disputes involving significant personal consequences makes him accustomed to mediations in which legal issues and human dynamics are closely intertwined.