



HON. RICHARD E. RICO

Mediator • Arbitrator • Referee



Hon. Richard E. Rico draws upon 20 years of judicial expertise and 15 years of civil litigation and appellate experience to resolve civil disputes, including Employment, PAGA, Wage & Hour, Commercial Contract and General Business, Legal Malpractice, Toxic Tort, and Consumer Disputes.

As a Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, Judge Rico presided over an Independent Calendar Court, where he conducted trials, motions, pretrial proceedings, and settlement conferences in a wide variety of civil matters. The strength of his legal knowledge and his thorough analysis of the issues at hand--combined with his excellent judicial temperament--have made him one of the court's most well-respected jurists.

As an ardent advocate for equal access to justice, Judge Rico has been described as a patient judge who gives each litigant a chance to be heard. He listens closely and with an open mind, and he has a stellar reputation for impartiality and integrity. Judge Rico brings this same temperament and character to his work as a mediator, arbitrator, and referee.

A native of Los Angeles, Judge Rico was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles County Law Library. He has also participated in the CORO Foundation, providing real-world experience for young scholars. His wife, Barbara, is a Professor of English at Loyola Marymount University.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Employment, including Wrongful Termination, Harassment, Discrimination
PAGA (Private Attorney General Act) Cases
Wage & Hour
Commercial Contract / General Business
Legal Malpractice
Toxic Tort
Consumer Disputes, including Lemon Law

JUDICIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Judge, Los Angeles Superior Court, 2000-2020
Judge, Los Angeles Municipal Court, 1999-2000
Associate Justice *Pro Tem*, California Court of Appeal, 2nd Appellate District, 2002

Judge Rico was appointed to the Los Angeles Municipal Court by then Governor Gray Davis in 1999. At the time of his appointment, he was the only Judge of that court of Mexican descent. He was subsequently elevated to the Superior Court upon court unification in 2000.

Beginning in 2006, Judge Rico handled civil assignments, including 11 years presiding over an Independent Calendar Court in Downtown Los Angeles. He has handled numerous cases in the areas of Employment, Wage & Hour, PAGA, Contract Disputes, and Lemon Law. He was an Associate Editor of *Gavel to Gavel*, in addition to being a member of the Legislation and Civil and Small Claims Committees. His previous assignments include Criminal Calendar Trial Courts and Criminal Arraignment Calendar.

In 2002, Judge Rico was appointed to serve on assignment as an Associate Justice *Pro Tem* for the California Court of Appeal, 2nd Appellate District, Division One.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Research Attorney, 4th District Court of Appeal, Division Three, 1995-1999
Shareholder, Breidenbach, Huchting & Hamblet, 1984-1995

After graduating from Stanford Law School in 1984, Judge Rico joined the well-known Los Angeles civil litigation firm of Breidenbach, Huchting & Hamblet (later Breidenbach, Buckley, Huchting, Halm & Hamblet). As a lawyer, he handled numerous cases in the areas of Employment, Legal Malpractice, and Toxic Tort. He continued his work at the firm for 11 years, eventually becoming a Partner.

In 1995, Judge Rico entered public service and joined the California Court of Appeal, 4th Appellate District, as a Senior Research Attorney. He worked closely with then Associate Justice Hon. William F. Rylaarsdam, an assignment which provided him with unmatched experience in all areas of the law, including criminal, civil, family, and juvenile. He remained at the Court of Appeal until his appointment to the bench in 1999.

EDUCATION

Stanford Law School, J.D., 1984
Yale University, B.A., 1976

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Los Angeles County Law Library, Board of Trustees, 2017-2020
California State Bar
CORO Foundation
Mexican American Bar Association
Yale Club of Southern California

Judge Rico is also admitted to practice in the California State Bar (1984), United States District Court, Central District (1985), and United States Court of Appeal, Ninth Circuit (1993).