



HON. SUSAN LOPEZ-GISS

Judge of the Superior Court (Ret.)

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Your Partner in Resolution

Hon. Susan Lopez-Giss (Ret.) served 15 years as a Judge for the Los Angeles Superior Court, with the entirety of her time on the bench devoted to Family Law. Judge Lopez-Giss presided over thousands of cases involving all types of contested and complex Family Law matters, including parentage cases, custody and visitation issues, child and spousal support, business valuation, and property division. In addition to issuing thousands of rulings, Judge Lopez-Giss became known for actively and successfully settling her cases. Her strong legal mind, coupled with an emphasis on collaboration to resolve family disputes, has resulted in her reputation as an effective problem solver and adjudicator.

Prior to her judicial career, Judge Lopez-Giss served 30 years in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, where she helped develop a groundbreaking domestic violence diversion and counseling program that was implemented statewide. She was also instrumental in drafting a domestic violence prosecution manual and has trained law enforcement personnel across the country. For her pioneering work developing these programs, she was presented with a Resolution by the Mayor and the Los Angeles City Council.

Judge Lopez-Giss later became the City Attorney's Assistant General Counsel for the legal division of the Department of Water and Power. She holds the distinction of being the first woman to reach that position. In this role, Judge Lopez-Giss represented LADWP in matters involving employment, contracts, regulatory matters as mandated by the Federal Energy Commission, the California Public Utility Code, water issues, rate structures, tort, workers' compensation, and environmental issues. Additionally, she was individually responsible for representing the commercial interests of LADWP, which included bankruptcy matters, bond issuances (for over \$1 billion in LADWP bond issuances and refinancings), and litigation of fraud actions.

Judge Lopez-Giss is a native of Los Angeles. She received her A.B. in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles and her J.D. from Loyola Law School.

FAMILY LAW EXPERTISE

- **PARENTAGE CASES**
- **CUSTODY:** Move-Away; Abuse Allegations; Parental Alienation; Educational Issues (including psychological, developmental, emotional, socialization); Medical Issues; Co-Parenting Failures
- **VISITATION:** Allocation Of Time; Distance; Best Interests Determinations
- **CHILD AND SPOUSAL SUPPORT:** Imputation Of Income; Allegations Of Hidden Assets
- **BUSINESS VALUATION:** Sole Ownership, Partnerships, Corporations; Entertainment Industry: Bonuses vs. Loans; Real Estate, Rental Income; Depreciation vs. Actual Assets

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT, 2007-2022

- Judge of the Superior Court, Family Law Division, 2007-2022
- Personnel and Budget Committee, 2015-2022
- Facilities Committee, 2017-2020
- Los Angeles Superior Court Executive Committee, 2011-2013

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

LOS ANGELES CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, 1976-2006

- Assistant General Counsel, Department of Water and Power, 2004-2006
- Assistant City Attorney, 1991-2004
- Criminal Prosecutor, 1976-1991

LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL COURT, 1974-1976

- Law Clerk, Law and Motion, for Hon. Robert Fainer and Hon. Warren Deering
- Drafted opinions for the judges on motions relating to discovery, jurisdiction, interpleader, demurrers, and summary judgment.

EDUCATION

- Loyola University School of Law, J.D., 1974
- University of California, Los Angeles, A.B. Political Science, 1971
- Straus Institute For Dispute Resolution, Certificate of Completion, "Mediating the Litigated Case", 2021 (42 hours of mediation training)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- East District Judicial Excellence Award, 2007
- Recognized by the Los Angeles Daily Journal as one of the "Top 75 Women Litigators in the State", 2005
- Honorary Service Award Certificate from California Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students for special recognition of outstanding service to children and youth, 1994
- Commendation by Ventura County Superintendent of Schools and the Constitutional Rights Foundation for participation in Mock Trial Competition, 1991
- Presented with a Resolution by the Mayor and Los Angeles City Council in recognition for developing the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Program, 1981

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Judge Lopez-Giss has been recognized throughout her career for her staunch dedication to charitable causes. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the UCLA Jonsson Cancer Center from 2005 to 2016, on the National Selective Service Committee from 1996 to 2007, is actively involved in the American Friends of the Hebrew University and the 1939 Club, and is a lifetime member of the California Women Lawyers Association.