



HON. MICHAEL I. LEVANAS

Mediator • Arbitrator



Hon. Michael I. Levanas (Ret.) is a distinguished and respected mediator and arbitrator with 21 years of judicial experience as a Judge and Commissioner of the Los Angeles Superior Court. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated an unwavering dedication to the principles of fairness, integrity, and impartiality within the judicial system.

Judge Levanas earned his B.A. in Economics from the University of California, San Diego, before obtaining his J.D. from Rutgers University. Following graduation from law school, he commenced his legal career at the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office. Subsequently, he transitioned to private practice as a Partner at a distinguished civil and criminal defense firm located in Santa Monica, focusing on handling dependency cases.

Judge Levanas brings a wealth of judicial experience and expertise to his ADR practice. In 2002, he was elected by the Judges of the Los Angeles Superior Court to be a Commissioner. He was the first Commissioner to serve as the Assistant Site Judge at the Metropolitan Courthouse, before transitioning to the Stanley Mosk Courthouse to serve as a Family Law Commissioner. In 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed him as a Judge.

While on the bench, Judge Levanas presided over various areas of law, including Family Law, Probate, Mental Health, and Juvenile Courts. In addition, Judge Levanas was selected to serve in court leadership as the Supervising Judge of the Probate and Mental Health courts and as the Presiding Judge of the 50 Los Angeles County Juvenile Courts. His knowledge and insight made him a sought-after speaker, and he regularly presented to bar associations on a range of family law and probate related topics, including custody and visitation issues, family law trial advocacy, and litigation and negotiation strategies. In his final four years on the bench, Judge Levanas presided over Civil Trials at the Santa Monica Courthouse, demonstrating his versatility and command of civil matters, including elder abuse, landlord/tenant, medical malpractice, partnership dissolution, and personal injury.

Judge Levanas possesses an exceptional reputation among his peers, attorneys, and litigants. His remarkable attention to detail and extensive legal expertise have earned him widespread respect. Attorneys particularly appreciate his patience, gracious demeanor, and ability to diffuse tension through the judicious use of humor. Known for his even-tempered nature, Judge Levanas goes above and beyond to ensure that each party feels heard and valued. In 2014, he was named Judge of the Year by the Pasadena Bar Association.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

- Elder Abuse
- Family Law
- Fee Disputes
- Landlord/Tenant
- Medical Malpractice
- Minor's Compromise
- Partnership Dissolution
- Personal Injury
- Probate, Estates & Trusts

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court

2005-2023

- Civil Trials, Santa Monica Courthouse, 2019-2023
- Presiding Judge, Juvenile Courts, 2015-2018
- Supervising Judge, Probate and Mental Health, Stanley Mosk, 2014-2015
- Probate Court, Stanley Mosk, 2009-2014
- Family Law/Probate, Santa Monica, 2007-2009
- Probate Court, Stanley Mosk, 2006-2007
- Family Law Court, Stanley Mosk, 2005-2006

Commissioner of the Los Angeles Superior Court

2002-2005

- Family Law Commissioner, Stanley Mosk, 2004-2005
- Assistant Site Judge, Metropolitan Courthouse, 2002-2003

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Private Practice

1979-2002

- Partner, Randolph and Levanas, 1992-2002
- Partner, Overland, Berke, Wesley, Gits, Randolph and Levanas, 1981-1992
- Partner, Randolph and Levanas, 1980-1981
- Partner, Selman and Levanas, 1979-1980

Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office

1975-1979

- Juvenile Court, Deputy in Charge, 1978-1979
- Central Misdemeanors, 1977-1978
- Traffic Misdemeanors, 1976-1977
- Preliminary Hearings, 1975-1976

EDUCATION

- Juris Doctor, Rutgers University, 1974
- Bachelor of Arts in Economics, University of California, San Diego, 1971

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Judge Levanas is often asked to present to various bar associations and professional groups. For a complete list of his speaking engagements, please visit his website at www.JudgeLevanas.com.