



HON. VICTORIA GERRARD CHANEY (RET.)

Mediations, Arbitrations, References,
Appellate Consultations



Hon. Victoria Gerrard Chaney (Ret.) is a distinguished mediator, arbitrator, referee, and appellate consultant with an illustrious career spanning more than four decades. Justice Chaney was confirmed to the California Court of Appeal, Second District, Division One in 2009 following nineteen years as a trial judge. Her experience as an appellate justice is broad and deep. She has handled an extensive array of cases including civil, criminal, family law, probate, dependency, and writs, both civil and criminal. Additionally, she has sat by appointment on the California Supreme Court and has served as a special master for the Commission on Judicial Performance.

Justice Chaney was assigned to the Complex Litigation Division at Central Civil West Courthouse from its inception in 2000 until her nomination to the Court of Appeal in 2009. Her caseload included large class actions, mass torts, insurance coverage, construction defects, product liability actions, pharmaceutical claims, environmental claims, labor law, and Government disputes.

As a judge, Justice Chaney was highly regarded for her judicial demeanor, intelligence, and case management skills. Her respectful and considerate approach fostered a professional and personable environment, and her analytical approach to complex legal issues demonstrated her formidable intellectual rigor. In trial, she skillfully managed cases involving dozens of attorneys, focusing on essential issues and facilitating effective resolutions. Attorneys consistently commended Justice Chaney's even-handedness, resulting in her reputation as one of the best judges in the division.

Prior to her appointment to the bench, Justice Chaney served for eleven years in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, including as Assistant City Attorney in the Civil Liability Division. Before that she was an associate with Dryden Harrington and Swartz. Her career in law followed an earlier profession in healthcare, where she worked as a registered nurse at the LAC-USC and Cedars-Sinai medical centers. She continues to hold active licenses as a registered and public health nurse.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Appellate
- Civil Rights
- Class Actions/Mass Torts
- Complex Litigation
- Construction
- Environmental/Toxic Tort
- Fee Disputes
- Government Entities
- Health Care
- Legal Malpractice
- Medical Malpractice
- Official Misconduct
- Personal Injury
- Products Liability

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

CALIFORNIA COURT OF APPEAL

Associate Justice, Second Appellate District, Division One, 2009-2024

- Appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Confirmed and sworn in July 1, 2009.
- Handled civil, criminal, family law, probate, and dependency cases, and writs.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Judge of the Superior Court, 1994-2009

- Elevated to the Superior Court by Governor Pete Wilson.
- Complex Litigation Division, Central Civil West Courthouse, 2000-2009.
- Presided over civil cases at Stanley Mosk and criminal and civil trials in Compton.

MUNICIPAL COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Judge of the Municipal Court, 1990-1994

- Appointed to the Municipal Court by Governor George Deukmejian.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

LOS ANGELES CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Assistant City Attorney, 1979-1990

VEATCH CARLSON LLP

Associate Attorney, 1982-1983

DRYDEN, HARRINGTON & SWARTZ

Associate Attorney, 1978-1979

NURSING EXPERIENCE

Registered Nurse, LAC-USC Medical Center, 1968-1972

Registered Nurse, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, 1967-1968

EDUCATION

Juris Doctorate, Loyola Law School, 1977

Bachelor of Science, Mount Saint Mary's University, 1967

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), Los Angeles Chapter
California Judges Association (CJA)

NOTABLE CASES

- *Doe v. Unocal*. A class action case by several “Doe” plaintiffs, tribespeople from the mountainous area of Myanmar, alleging human rights abuses by Unocal, a large petroleum company, and its business partners, including the government of Myanmar, while constructing a gas pipeline through the jungles of Myanmar. The plaintiffs alleged beatings, rapes, and the wrongful deaths of loved ones, forced labor, and confiscation of ancestral tribal property, in addition to allegations by a stockholder claiming wrongful actions by Unocal.
- *Mejia v. Dole* (BC340079) and *Rivera v. Dole* (BC379820) (collectively part of the DBCP Pesticide Judicial Council Coordinated cases). In the 1960s and 1970s, Dow Chemical Company manufactured DBCP, a pesticide which killed nematodes infecting banana plants. Dole Fruit Company used DBCP to eradicate nematodes on its banana plantations located in Central America. Men who worked on these plantations brought suit in the Los Angeles Superior Court against both Dole and Dow, claiming sterility as a result of exposure to DBCP. Shortly after trial in the *Mejia* matter, defendants discovered a massive fraud allegedly perpetrated by plaintiffs and their Nicaraguan attorneys. Mutual targeted discovery began, culminating in a hearing over fraud on the court. Finding that a massive fraud had been committed which significantly tainted both cases, the matters were dismissed by the court after a several day hearing.
- *Occidental Petroleum v. Certain Underwriters of Lloyds of London*. More than 150 sabotage explosions were perpetrated by the FARC (a rebel army trying to overthrow the Colombian government) on the Occidental Petroleum oil pipeline in Colombia, which carried crude oil from the jungle where it was pumped to the ocean and loaded onto oil tankers. Occidental was insured by Lloyds. Occidental sued Lloyds over whether this series of explosions was only one incident carried out pursuant to a common plan to sabotage the pipeline which would require only one deductible or many incidents requiring one deductible for each incident. The trial was bifurcated and the issue of what was an “incident” was tried first. A jury determined that there were two incidents, each involving many sabotage events, rather than multiple incidents and the matter settled after the verdict in part one of the trial.
- *Weiss v. AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals*. False advertising claims under Business and Professions Code sections 17200 and 17500 were brought against AstraZeneca regarding the “mirror image” drugs of Prilosec and Nexium claiming that although these were sold as two separate drugs, they were in actuality mirror images of the same drug.
- *Gorman v. Crenshaw Lumber et al*. After plaintiffs, the parents and three children, moved into a newly constructed home, mold began growing on more than 50% of the walls in the house. During the years they lived in the home, the father and the two older children began complaining of chronic sinus infections and frequent colds, and the mother began having asthma attacks. The youngest child, however, who began living in the home while only a few months of age, claimed significant brain damage, including seizures, unsteady gait and intellectual deficits as a result of exposure to mold. Prior to trial, all but one of the defendants settled with the plaintiff. Defendant declined to settle and trial began. During trial, it was discovered that Defendant had failed to file a list of experts as required by the Code of Civil Procedure. It was then learned that documents purporting to be an expert witness exchange,

given to the court and on which the court relied in earlier rulings, had been fraudulently concocted. As a result of the fraud on the court and parties, Defendant's experts were disallowed. Defendant then settled with the plaintiffs.

- *The Vaccine Cases*, JCCP No. 4246. This Prop 65 matter involved a collection of multiple personal injury class actions involving allegations that the preservative Thimerisol, used in vaccines, caused autism. These cases requested medical monitoring and damages.
- *Colgan/Wilson v. Leatherman Tools*, Case No. BC 247889. Class action suit for fraud and false advertising brought under Business and Professions Section 17200 and Civil Code Section 1770, claiming tools advertised to be "made in the USA" were actually made in whole or in part outside of the United States.
- *The Enron Litigation*. Enron-related cases filed in California in which the plaintiffs, large investment funds (including multiple retirement funds) brought suit against several banks and stock/bond broker companies for losses allegedly incurred as a result of the funds purchased of Enron bonds.
- *Merchant v. Redstone and Blockbuster Video*, Case No. BC 244270. Class action suit brought by over 200 independent video rental stores throughout California alleging antitrust violations and unfair competition by Blockbuster Video and the major motion picture studios.
- *City of Los Angeles, et al. v. McCarthy Western Constructors, et al.*, Case No. BC 269553. Construction defect/public works case involving the construction of an office building for the LADWP. In addition, there were over 140 plaintiffs in intervention, alleging personal injuries as a result of exposure to mold in the building.
- *The Safety-Kleen Cases*, JCCP No. 4136. A judicial council coordinated case involving more than 30 individual personal injury actions where the plaintiffs alleged that they developed cancer as a result of exposure to the defendants' products and chemicals.
- *Reller v. Philip Morris*, Case No. BC 261796. This complex litigation matter brought by a lifelong smoker, who claimed that he contracted lung cancer caused by smoking cigarettes. The matter resolved after trial.
- *Gibilisco v. Thompson*, Case No. BC 203727. Suit brought by a paraplegic plaintiff and the family of his deceased co-worker for injuries caused by a collapse of a "radial stacker," a large machine for loading loose materials at the Port of Los Angeles.
- *Sonnier v. Farmers Group*, Case No. BC 195046. Action brought for wrongful termination by a 'whistleblower' claims adjuster who alleged that he was a special employee of Farmers Group rather than an independent contractor employed by an independent adjusting firm.
- *C&L Glogal/Ampac v. GM/AC Delco*, Case No. BC 206274. Case involved a suit by a distributor of AC/Delco products, claiming that AC/Delco wrongfully terminated his franchise.
- *In Re VIOXX Cases*. This Judicial Coordinated proceeding comprised over four thousand individual law suits against Merck Pharmaceutical Company and various pharmaceutical distributors alleging cardiovascular disease after taking VIOXX for pain.