



HON. VEDICA PURI (RET.)

Mediator • Arbitrator • Referee



For over 30 years, Hon. Vedica Puri (Ret.) has been at the forefront of litigation and dispute resolution—first as a trial lawyer, then as a respected judge, and now as a mediator. Her legal career has been defined by an unwavering commitment to justice, first-hand knowledge of trial dynamics, and an ability to navigate complex disputes with skill and finesse. She has built a reputation as a tenacious advocate, a thoughtful jurist, and a pragmatic problem-solver.

Having represented both plaintiffs and defendants, Judge Puri understands the risk calculations of the parties and insurers, and knows, first hand, how judges weigh legal arguments. Her evaluative approach allows her to provide candid, informed assessments, helping parties see the strengths and weaknesses of their positions.

Throughout her judicial career, Judge Puri was highly effective in settling cases. She considered her appointment to the San Francisco Superior Court's Civil Settlement Panel one of her best assignments. She often stayed past court hours to work with attorneys and parties, finding common ground in even the most contentious disputes. She understood that successful resolution requires seeing the case from all angles—the legal strengths, the financial pressures, and the human impact.

"I had the pleasure of appearing at settlement conferences before Judge Puri when she was on San Francisco Superior Court's Civil Settlement Panel. She worked incredibly hard and was extremely effective. I look forward to working with her as a private mediator."

- Client Testimonial

Judge Puri's legal career began in the trenches of litigation. A Bay Area native, she earned her law degree from Santa Clara University, School of Law and quickly went on to distinguish herself as a formidable trial lawyer. She began her career in legal malpractice defense, gaining invaluable insight into professional liability and risk assessment. She later transitioned to plaintiff-side litigation, representing individuals and businesses in high-stakes civil cases. Over her 24 years in practice, she tried dozens of jury and bench trials, covering a wide range of matters from insurance coverage, bad faith, legal malpractice, personal injury, employment disputes to property conflicts. She became particularly well-known for her expertise in insurance law, securing significant recoveries for policyholders and gaining in-depth experience with bad faith cases. Her ability to dissect complex policies, understand insurer strategies, and anticipate courtroom arguments made her a sought-after trial lawyer.

As a partner at Pillsbury & Coleman LLP, she was not only a fierce advocate in the courtroom but also a key strategist in settlement negotiations. She understood that not every case should go to trial—sometimes the best victory is a well-negotiated resolution. This philosophy foreshadowed her eventual transition to mediation.

"Judge Puri has been an invaluable asset to the San Francisco bench. A consummate trial judge, she applied her experience and skills in civil and criminal trials, settlements, and bench trials to a variety of legal disciplines."

- San Francisco Superior Court, Presiding Judge

In 2019, Governor Jerry Brown appointed Judge Puri to the San Francisco Superior Court, making her the first Indian-American judge on that bench. Over the next six years, she handled a broad spectrum

of civil and criminal matters, demonstrating exceptional versatility and judicial temperament. She presided over civil trials, mandatory settlement conferences, complex single-assignment cases, law and motion, and probate. She became known for her ability to manage high-stakes litigation and trials with fairness and efficiency. Whether ruling on dispositive motions or overseeing intricate settlement negotiations, she demonstrated a sharp legal mind, a pragmatic approach, and a profound understanding of how cases unfold in a courtroom.

In addition to her distinguished judicial career, she has the distinction of having represented both plaintiffs and defendants during her many years as a trial attorney. This gives her key insights and the tools necessary to bridge the gap between opposing sides. She knows how judges think and what persuades them and she understands the pressures litigants face. She has successfully settled hundreds of cases over the decades, from high-value insurance disputes to complex business litigation. Respected for her fairness, temperament, pragmatism, and ability to connect with people, she brings a true dedication to resolving cases.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Business/Breach of Contract
- Employment
- Insurance Coverage & Bad Faith
- Legal Malpractice
- Personal Injury
- Probate, Estates & Trusts
- Real Property

EDUCATION

Santa Clara University, School of Law – Juris Doctor (J.D.), 1994
St. Xavier's College, Bombay, India – Bachelor of Arts in English Literature, First Class, 1991

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

Judge of the Superior Court, San Francisco County (2019-2025)
Pro Tem, San Francisco Superior Court (2004-2018)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Pillsbury & Coleman LLP, San Francisco, CA
Senior Associate, Partner (2002-2018)

Drinker, Biddle & Reath LLP, San Francisco, CA
Senior Associate (2001-2002)

Sedgwick LLP, San Francisco, CA
Associate (2000-2001)

Alborg, Veiluva & Cannata LLP, Walnut Creek, CA
Junior Associate (1996-1999)

PURI'S PATH TO SETTLEMENT

Answering this question in a clear-eyed fashion: What does the evidence so far tell us?

Doing a deep dive into where the case is heading.

Understanding the post-Covid California jury psychology and jury verdicts.

Realistically assessing exposure from both the 40,000-foot view and granular level.

Finding out what is important for the decision makers on each side.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- Port of San Francisco, Northeast Waterfront Advisory Group (2003-2010)
- Homeowners Association Board Member (2010-2019)
- Mentorship of Aspiring Law Students & Courtroom Education Initiatives

PROFESSIONAL AWARDS AND HONORS

- Super Lawyer – Northern California (2012-2018)
- Bay Area Mover & Shaker, San Francisco Chronicle (2010)
- Dean's Scholarship, Santa Clara University School of Law

PHILANTHROPY

Judge Puri's dedication to philanthropy and community service is reflected in the Puri Family Scholarship, which she established in honor of her late mother. This annual scholarship, matched by the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area (AABA) Law Foundation and its members, provides crucial financial assistance to aspiring Asian Pacific American law students. Through this meaningful tribute, Judge Puri honors her mother's legacy while supporting the next generation of legal professionals.