



JACQUELINE J. HARDING, ESQ.

Mediator



Jacqueline J. Harding, Esq. is an employment mediator with approximately 30 years of civil litigation and settlement experience handling complex workplace disputes. A longtime partner at Wilson Elser, where she practiced for more than two decades, Ms. Harding has extensive experience litigating, evaluating, trying, and resolving employment matters involving discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault, retaliation, hostile work environment, wrongful and constructive termination, whistleblower claims, wage and hour class actions and PAGA matters, employment contracts, Equal Pay Act claims, disability law, and FMLA, CFRA and other leave disputes.

Ms. Harding approaches mediation with the perspective of a seasoned trial lawyer and the temperament of a problem solver. She is thoughtful, well prepared, calm under pressure and deliberate in forming conclusions. After decades of advocating for clients in adversarial litigation, she became increasingly drawn to dispute resolution as her definition of a successful outcome evolved. Rather than viewing success solely in terms of obtaining the best possible result for one side, she values outcomes that make practical sense for everyone at the table and allow parties to move forward without requiring one side to defeat the other.

Her mediation philosophy is grounded in the belief that parties can find points of agreement even in highly contentious disputes. Ms. Harding begins with those areas of common ground and works to build toward a practical resolution. She prepares carefully, studying mediation briefs and speaking with counsel before the mediation to understand the disputed and undisputed facts, the parties' objectives, and the issues that may present obstacles to settlement.

When parties reach an impasse, Ms. Harding focuses on understanding what is truly preventing movement rather than simply pressing harder for compromise. Her litigation experience has taught her that disputes framed in terms of money or legal positions may also involve fairness, respect, acknowledgment, or the need to be heard. Through careful questioning and listening, she works to identify the interests and motivations underlying each side's position while helping parties realistically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their cases, how a judge or jury may view the evidence, and the financial and personal costs of continued litigation.

Throughout her litigation career, Ms. Harding handled all phases of civil cases, including written discovery, depositions, witness preparation, retention and preparation of investigators and expert witnesses, electronic discovery, site visits, client strategy meetings, expert discovery and trial motion practice. She represented clients in state and federal court at both the trial and appellate levels and counseled employers on preventative practices designed to avoid and resolve workplace disputes.

Ms. Harding also has a longstanding commitment to professional service and mentorship. For seven years, she led Wilson Elser's national pro bono team, engaging attorneys across more than 30 offices in providing legal services to their local communities. She has mentored law students and young lawyers

and was recognized with the Outstanding Alumnus of the Year Award from the Southwestern Law School Black Student Association.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Employment
 - Discrimination
 - Harassment
 - Retaliation
 - Wrongful Termination
 - Sexual Harassment/Assault
 - Wage & Hour
 - Disability/ADA
 - FMLA/CFRA
 - Class Actions/PAGA
 - Employment Contracts
- Entertainment
- Housing Discrimination
- Civil Rights

WHY ATTORNEYS SELECT JACQUELINE HARDING

- Approximately 30 years of civil litigation and settlement experience.
- More than two decades as a partner at Wilson Elser.
- Deep subject-matter experience across nearly all categories of California employment litigation.
- Experience handling high-stakes and high-exposure disputes through trial and negotiated resolution.
- Trial and appellate experience that informs practical litigation-risk assessment.
- Calm, thoughtful and measured communication style, including in difficult or highly contentious matters.
- Ability to identify the interests and motivations underlying entrenched legal and monetary positions.
- Preparation-driven, resolution-focused approach to mediation.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

WILSON ELSER, Partner (2003-2026)

- Represented private and public employers in all aspects of labor relations and employment law, including litigation and preventative counseling.
- Handled wage and hour matters, PAGA class actions, wrongful termination, employee discipline, executive employment contract disputes, Title VII and California FEHA claims, sexual harassment training and investigations, workplace violence, FMLA/CFRA matters, employee raiding and trade secret protection.
- Represented clients in state and federal court at the trial and appellate levels. Clients included global automobile manufacturers, entertainment companies, banking and insurance institutions, telecommunications, technology and health care businesses.

- Practice also included product liability, general liability, contract disputes, intellectual property, unfair competition, and privacy and communications law.

LIEBERT, CASSIDY, WHITMORE, Attorney (2001-2003)

- Represented public entities in discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, wrongful termination and Section 1983 litigation.
- Handled matters under the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act and other labor relations issues between local governments and employees.

EPSTEIN, TURNER AND WEISS, Attorney (1999-2001)

- Litigated business contract disputes and employment matters involving discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, wrongful termination and disability discrimination, as well as workers' compensation and personal injury matters.

GUTIERREZ, PRECIADO AND HOUSE, Attorney (1997)

- Represented public entities in race and gender discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination lawsuits, including Section 1983 matters.

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY, Attorney (1996-1997)

- Focused on entertainment and union contracts, labor disputes, labor relations and employment-law issues in the workplace.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & ACTIVITIES

- California State Bar Association
- Los Angeles County Bar Association
- Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles
- Former Head, Wilson Elser National Pro Bono Team

EDUCATION

- J.D., Southwestern University School of Law
- M.A., Modern Global History, University of Memphis
- B.A., Theater, Film and Television, University of California, Los Angeles

COURT ADMISSIONS

- Supreme Court of California
- California Court of Appeal
- Superior Courts of California
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What types of employment cases does Jacqueline Harding mediate?

Ms. Harding focuses on employment disputes involving discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault, retaliation, whistleblower claims, wrongful and constructive termination, wage and hour and PAGA matters, employment contracts, Equal Pay Act claims, disability and accommodation, and FMLA, CFRA and other leave issues.

What is Jacqueline Harding's mediation style?

Her style is calm, thoughtful, well prepared and resolution focused. She listens carefully before forming conclusions, looks beyond stated legal and monetary positions to understand what is driving the dispute, and helps parties evaluate practical paths toward resolution.

How does Jacqueline Harding's litigation background benefit parties in mediation?

With approximately 30 years of civil litigation experience, Ms. Harding understands how cases develop from discovery through expert preparation, trial and settlement. She uses that experience to help parties assess the strengths and weaknesses of their positions, how a judge or jury may view the evidence, and the financial and personal costs of continued litigation.

How does Jacqueline Harding approach an impasse in mediation?

Rather than simply pressing harder, Ms. Harding works to identify what is preventing movement. She explores issues such as litigation risk, fairness, respect, acknowledgment and whether a party feels heard, while looking for areas of agreement that can create a path forward.

What experience does Jacqueline Harding have with PAGA and wage and hour disputes?

Her employment practice included wage and hour matters and PAGA class actions, along with preventative counseling and litigation for private and public employers.

Does Jacqueline Harding mediate retaliation, whistleblower and wrongful termination cases?

Yes. Retaliation, statutory retaliation, whistleblower termination, wrongful termination and constructive termination are among her core areas of employment-law expertise.