



Hon. Donald J. Sullivan, Ret.



Results Beyond DisputeSM

Judge Sullivan retired on March 1, 2017, after more than 13 years of distinguished service for the San Francisco Superior Court, and he is now available to serve as mediator, arbitrator, and private judge statewide. During his tenure on the bench, he presided over a broad spectrum of civil matters including toxic tort, product liability, personal injury, and real estate cases. In addition, he spent several years on the court's Family Law and Appellate panels. After graduating top ten in his class from Santa Clara University Law School in 1971, Judge Sullivan began his legal career working in the San Francisco Regional Office for the California Department of Transportation where he tried numerous cases, covering everything from dangerous conditions on public property to eminent domain actions. In 1987 he left the public sector to enter private practice with the plaintiff's side tort and the employment law firm of Herron & Herron, where his practice focused on toxic torts, product liability, personal injury, medical malpractice, and labor & employment issues. In 1998, he joined his former Caltrans colleague Thomas J. Brandi at the Brandi Firm specializing in catastrophic injury and wrongful death cases. As an attorney, Judge Sullivan has tried cases before juries in 17 counties throughout Northern and Southern California. Judge Sullivan's outstanding work during his career as an attorney and on the bench has earned him a great reputation in the Bay Area legal community. In 2002, he became President of the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (SFTLA). In 2013, he was named "Judge of the Year" by SFTLA. An attorney commented, "Judge Don Sullivan has the 'trifecta' with respect to being in a position to be a superb mediator. He was a defense trial lawyer and then a plaintiffs' trial lawyer and then became a trial judge late in his career. There is no one I know who is more experienced. On top of all of it, he is a great guy."

LEGAL CAREER & PRIOR EXPERIENCE

- Neutral, Judicate West (2018-Present)
- Marin County Superior Court Settlement Panelist (2019)
- Judge, Superior Court, San Francisco (2003-17); Unified Family Court (2005-2009) Civil Division (2009-2014); Settlement Conferences (2009-2011); Court's Appellate Panel (2014-2016)
- Attorney, Brandi Law Firm, San Francisco (1998-2003)
- Judge Pro Tem, Day of Trial Settlement Program, San Francisco (1997-2003)
- Judge Pro Tem, Judicial Arbitration Program, San Francisco (1992-2003)
- Settlement Master, Bar Association of San Francisco (1992-2003)
- Attorney, Herron and Herron, San Francisco (1987-1998)
- Attorney, Department of Transportation, State of California (Caltrans) (1972-1987)

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- J.D., Santa Clara University (1968-1971)
- BSEE, Santa Clara University (1964-1968)
- American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), Member (1991-Present)
- California Judges Association (CJA), Member (2003-Present)
- Kaiser Arbitration Program, Panel Neutral appointed by the Independent Administrator (2018-Present)
- American Board of Professional Liability Attorneys (ABPLA), Med Mal, Diplomate (1991 to 2003)
- National Board of Trial Advocacy (NBTA), Certified Civil Attorney (1991-2003)
- San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (SFTLA), Member (1987-2003)
- San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (SFTLA), Past President (2002)

PRACTICE AREAS

All Types of Personal Injury and Wrongful Death; Business/Contractual; Government Liability; Employment; Medical Negligence; Real Property including Inverse Condemnation; Uninsured/Underinsured Arbitrations

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

LOCATIONS

- Judge of the Year Award, San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (2013)

In his spare time, Judge Sullivan enjoys traveling, studying foreign languages, reading, hiking, taking long walks, and swimming. He is also a casual stamp and coin collector.

Northern California, All of California