

WILLIAM SHEFFIELD

AFFILIATION: Judicate West

LOCATION: Southern California

RATE: \$590/hour; \$5900/day

SPECIALTY: Tort, commercial and employment



RECENT CASES: He settled a gender discrimination case, in which French company that operates resorts worldwide started a promotion that offered discounts only to women. A man heard about this and filed suit. The defense challenged his motives saying he was greedy, but as a mediator Sheffield said he explained to the defense that a motive wasn't the issue in the case. Instead it was about whether the policy violated California law. After a trip to France to meet with the president of the company the case was settled by ending the policy and a combination of money and vouchers. In another case, a man who was trying to promote a new website took a film crew to the San Bernardino Mountains, where his cousin housed Rocky the Bear, a bear that has been in many films and television shows. The man went into the bear's arena, and the seven foot tall 700-pound bear leaned into to kiss the man, but instead bit his throat. He died a minute later. While Sheffield was able to settle the wrongful death case, the case of the workman's compensation carrier trying to recoup \$500,000 in money paid to his heirs is ongoing. Sheffield settled a case pitting the heirs of John Wayne against the owners of Wayne's former production company. Both the heir and the production company believed they were the rightful owners of John Wayne memorabilia that was in the company's possession. Ultimately the memorabilia was split between the heirs and the owner of the production company, who was actually the wife of Wayne's oldest son.

BACKGROUND: Orange County Superior Court judge, former general counsel to Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Hong Kong

FACT: Sheffield resigned from the bench to attend the Yale Divinity School in 1984. He said several lawyers that often appeared before him joked that they wish he would have attended the school before he took the bench.