

Ex-Ballard Spahr Litigator Joins Calif. Arbitration Provider

By [James Mills](#), December 15, 2022

Private dispute resolution center [Judicate West](#) is expanding its mediation squad by adding a former [Ballard Spahr LLP](#) litigator who has spent the past five years as an arbitrator to its team in Los Angeles.

Alan Petlak, who spent eight years at Ballard Spahr and then almost five years at his own dispute resolution firm, [Petlak Mediation](#), has joined the Judicate West roster of neutrals, the center announced Monday. Although based in the Los Angeles office, Petlak will be available to serve as mediator or arbitrator for matters statewide.

In addition to his years of litigation experience, Petlak has also served as a panel mediator for the [U.S. District Court, Central District of California](#) and as a mediator for the Los Angeles County Superior Court Civil Mediation Vendor Resource Program.

Petlak was not immediately available for comment, but his new boss, Var Fox, executive vice president and co-founder of Judicate West, spoke highly of him.

"A former litigation partner, Alan mediates cases through a trial lawyer's perspective, relying on problem-solving techniques gleaned from his years of working cases up for trial while simultaneously working to settle those same disputes," Fox said in a statement. "He is both a facilitator and an evaluator, helping parties understand their goals and the strengths and weaknesses of their cases to enable them to make informed settlement decisions. He is a terrific addition to our neutral line-up in the region."

Founded in 1993, Judicate West now has about 100 neutrals on its roster and six offices throughout the Golden State — downtown Los Angeles, West Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco and Santa Ana.

Petlak earned his law degree in 1995 from the [University of Southern California](#)'s Gould School of Law. He worked two years as an associate with [Jones Bell Abbott Fleming & Fitzgerald LLP](#), then in 1997, moved to [Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP](#) where he stayed for eight years.

In 2005, he moved to Pircher Nichols & Meeks LLP, which is now a part of [Holland & Knight LLP](#). He stayed there five years before joining Ballard Spahr in 2010. Then in 2018, he left Ballard Spahr to open his dispute service, Petlak Mediation.