



Hon. James J. Di Cesare, Ret.



Results Beyond DisputeSM

Judge Di Cesare draws on nearly 49 years of legal experience and brings a wealth of knowledge, professionalism, and compassion to the private sector to serve as a neutral. During his two decades of distinguished service for the Orange County Superior Court, Judge Di Cesare presided over hundreds of jury trials, non-jury trials, and settlement conferences. He served on the Unlimited Civil Panel for 15 years and presided over a wide variety of civil disputes, including personal injury, real estate, employment, eminent domain, professional negligence, and complex cases. Before and during the pandemic, he served as Civil Supervising Judge for almost two years. The court was able to quickly pivot to provide a courtroom for civil cases and he is incredibly proud of the number of cases tried during that time. As Supervising Judge of Civil, he managed all civil case types, including complex civil matters, and he was also responsible for policy development and getting matters out to trial. As a Complex Civil Panel Judge, he managed class actions, wage and hour, PAGA, water rights, construction, and many others. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he spent almost 29 years as a civil practitioner handling all types of personal injury and business disputes. Judge Di Cesare has a profound appreciation and respect for the legal system and the attorneys who practice within it. In addition to serving in various leadership roles, including the Board of the Consumer Attorneys of California, Public Law Center, Board Member and President of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association, and Board or Judicial Advisory Board of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers for more than ten years, he has been a mentor to law students and young lawyers throughout his career. As an attorney, he was an active participant in both the Orange County Court Temporary Judge Program and the Orange County Court Arbitration Program. In his judicial capacity, he served on the Orange County Superior Court Executive Committee as a member or alternate for more than 10 years and was the chair of the court's State of the Court Program. For years, he was the co-chairperson and speaker for the Orange County College of Trial Advocacy. He has presented numerous lectures on substantive and procedural topics to bar associations and law school programs. Judge Di Cesare's dedication has been recognized by his peers, most notably as a recipient of the Orange County Bar Association's highest honor, the Franklin G. West Award. He believes that mediation and resolution of matters, whenever possible, is an integral part of the Justice System.

LEGAL CAREER & PRIOR EXPERIENCE

- Full-Time Neutral, Judicate West (2022-Present)
- Judge, Orange County Superior Court (2001-2022)
- Partner, Di Cesare & Behle, Specializing in Personal Injury, Business Litigation, Intellectual Property (1999-2001)
- Sole Practitioner, Law Offices of James Di Cesare, Specializing in Personal Injury, Business Litigation (1985-2000)
- Partner, Di Cesare & Weaver, Specializing in Personal Injury, Business Litigation (1976-1985)
- Associate Attorney, Aitken, Bradshaw & Andres, Specializing in Personal Injury, Business Litigation (1973-1976)
- Army National Guard (1969-1975)

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- J.D. Pepperdine University School of Law (1973)
- B.A. California State University, Fullerton (1969)
- Strauss Institute, Mediating the Litigated Case (2021)
- Faculty, OC Court Temp Judge, School of Law Training Program
- Orange County Superior Court Executive Committee, Member or Alternate
- State of the Court Program, Chair
- Association of Business Trial Lawyers (ABTL) , Former Board Member and Former

Judicial Advisory Board Member

- Orange County Bar Association, Former Board Member
- Orange County Bar Association, Civility Task Force, Co-Chair (2020 – Present)
- The Gray Inn of Court, Past President
- Orange County Trial Lawyers Association, Board Member and Past President
- Celtic Bar Association , Member
- Saint Thomas More Society, Member
- William P. Gray Legion Lex Inn of Court, Board Member and Past President
- Lex Romana, Founding Member
- Legal Aid Society, Former Board Member
- Public Law Center, Former Board Member
- Certificate, General Personal Injury, Consumer Attorneys of California

PRACTICE AREAS

All types of Personal Injury including Product Liability; Business/Contractual; Employment; Insurance/Bad Faith; Lemon Law; Professional Malpractice; Medical Negligence; Real Estate including Eminent Domain

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

- Lex Romana Hon. J. Alfano Lifetime Achievement Award (2017)
- Pepperdine Preceptor of the Year (2017)
- Daniel's Inn Vernon Hunt Jr. Memorial Award (2015)
- Franklin G. West Award, Orange County Bar Association (2015)
- Judge of the Year, Orange County Women Lawyers (2014)
- Judge of the Year Award, Orange County Business Litigation Section (2013)
- Judge of the Year Award, Celtic Bar Association (2011)
- Judge Oliver Award for Judicial Integrity, Compassion & Courage, Orange County Trial Lawyers (2009)
- George Francis Judicial Civility Award, American Board of Trial Advocates OC Chapter (2008)
- OCTLA Top Gun Personal Injury Trial Lawyer of the Year (2000)
- Recipient, Consumer Attorneys Presidential Award
- Wiley W. Manuel Award for Pro Bono Legal Services, State Bar of California (1998)

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Judge Di Cesare enjoys any activities that involve any of his 10 grandchildren. Travel is always enjoyable, especially when accompanied by his wife of over 50 years. Food and wine are an Italian must and he also enjoys working on his golf skills when time permits.

LOCATIONS

Orange County, All of California