



Hon. Larry A. Burns, Ret.



Results Beyond DisputeSM

Judge Burns joined Judicate West following 27 years of distinguished service as a federal judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, including two years as Chief Judge. Known for his extensive litigation experience, he is widely regarded as an outstanding trial lawyer, an effective settlement judge, and a scrupulous and efficient trial judge. As a lawyer, he tried more than 150 cases to jury verdict and argued 40 cases before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. He spent the first several years of his judicial career as a civil settlement judge, helping parties settle hundreds of cases. As a trial judge, he presided over more than 300 federal jury trials including high-profile cases involving elected officials, complex business and tort litigation, and multi-district and class action cases. He also supervised receivership actions, including a multi-million-dollar Ponzi scheme case in which investors eventually recouped over 95% of their investments. Throughout his judicial career, he served as a visiting trial judge in civil and criminal cases nationwide, including in New York City, Tampa, Jacksonville, Phoenix, Tucson, Boise, Coeur D'Alene, and Salt Lake City. He also sat by designation with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, authoring eight reported appellate decisions. Before taking the bench, he was engaged in the corporate sector, serving as Corporate Secretary and a member of the Board of Directors of a publicly traded company. His corporate and business experience includes shareholder securities actions, banking and regulatory enforcement, and employment litigation. Judge Burns views mediation as assisted negotiation. "Preparation, patience, and persistence are the keys," he notes. "By listening, questioning, and understanding the importance of pacing, a mediator focuses attention on the important aspects of a dispute and helps parties achieve a resolution."

LEGAL CAREER & PRIOR EXPERIENCE

- Full-time Neutral, Judicate West (2024-Present)
- U.S. District Court Judge, Southern District of California (2003-2024); Chief District Judge (2019-2021)
- U.S. Magistrate Judge, Southern District of California (1997-2003)
- Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District of California (1985-1997); Deputy U.S. Attorney (1993-1996); Chief of Violent Crimes (1990-1993); Assistant Chief, Criminal Division (1989-1990)
- Deputy District Attorney, County of San Diego (1979-1985)
- Director and Corporate Secretary, Bank of Commerce (1994-1997)
- Instructor, San Diego State University, School of Public Administration (1990-1997)

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- J.D., University of San Diego (1979)
- B.A., Point Loma College (1976)
- U.S. Judicial Conference, Committee on Intercircuit Assignments (2017-2022)
- Federal Bar Association, San Diego Chapter, Board of Governors (2012-2021)
- Association of Business Trial Lawyers, San Diego Chapter, Board of Governors (2001-2003; 2018-2021)
- Association of Business Trial Lawyers, San Diego Chapter, Judicial Advisory Board (2021-Present)
- American Board of Trial Advocates (2001-Present)
- American College of Trial Lawyers, Fellow (1997-Present)
- Enright Inn of Court, Founding Member and Master (1990-2003)
- Louis Welsh Inn of Court (1983-1984)

PRACTICE AREAS

Business/Contractual including Banking and Corporate/Fiduciary Obligations; Civil Rights; Class Actions; Employment; Insurance; Medical Malpractice; Personal Injury; Real Estate;

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

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- Co-authored the Ninth Circuit Criminal Handbook, now in its 14th edition
- Outstanding Jurist Award, San Diego County Bar Association (2022)
- Exemplary Service Award, Federal Bar Association, San Diego Chapter (2022)
- Dedicated Service Award, Federal Bar Association, San Diego Chapter (2021)
- Distinguished Alumni Award, University of San Diego School of Law (2019)
- Judicial Service Award, Thomas Jefferson School of Law Alumni Association (2016)
- Distinguished Achievement Award, Point Loma Nazarene University (2006)
- "Judge of the Year", San Diego Consumer Trial Lawyers (2002)
- Faculty Mentoring Award, San Diego State University (1997)
- Director's Award for Superior Performance, U.S. Department of Justice (1991)

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Judge Burns enjoys traveling worldwide with his wife. He also loves college and professional football.

LOCATIONS

San Diego, Nationwide