



Biographical Information

Thomas C. Watts, III, Esq.

Tom Watts is widely accepted and deeply experienced as a neutral, known for his respectful, but objective approach to the people he serves. He has served as a settlement judge pro tem in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties since 1985. He participates on the neutral panels in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. He is a Settlement Officer with the U.S. District Court, Central Division and the Bankruptcy court. Tom joined the IVAMS panel of neutrals in 2007. People say: Tom Watts is especially effective in difficult and emotion-laden disputes. He is a quick study; he gets a fast grasp on complex issues. Tom understands people and the lawyers that represent them. He is patient, persistent, and polite. Tom is a like Coach, Confidant, and Confessor. He is Trustworthy. Tom Watts is talented at keeping parties focused and encouraged.

His commitment to the field of Dispute Resolution is amply demonstrated by his success in earning a Master of Laws in Degree from the prestigious and nationally recognized Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. Since 2016 Tom has served as an adjunct professor of law teaching negotiation; mediation and Arbitration. He has spoken on numerous occasions at professional meetings and to law firms on the subjects including Negotiation and Mediation Advocacy. In addition, Tom Watts has written numerous articles and papers on current topics in the Dispute Resolution field.

A member of the California Bar since 1977, Mr. Watts is also admitted to all of California's District Courts, the 9th Circuit of the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States. Mr. Watts has gained a strong background of experience and understanding in civil litigation and transactional conflicts. His close personal connection to clients has carried over into his dispute resolution practice approach.

In addition to his professional depth in educational credentials, Mr. Watts has been a civil trial lawyer for more than forty years. He has served as arbitrator and mediator on superior court panels for more than 20 of those years. In that time he has assisted in the resolution of hundreds of cases involving business, real-estate, contract, employment, trade secret, commercial, personal injury and catastrophic property damage.

While involved in the trial or resolution of cases throughout the state, Mr. Watts has always maintained his strong roots in Southern California. Married for over 40 years, he is the father of two daughters. He is an avid Outdoorsman and fervent golfer. Tom has also been active in youth sports and civic affairs, having served on the Yorba Linda Parks and Recreation Commission. . He attended Chapman University and Western State Law School before earning the Master of Laws (LLM) degree from the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine Law School.

“My clients can expect and will receive:

1. A process that is uniquely tailored to the dispute, the parties, and their attorneys;
2. Thorough advance preparation and familiarization with the matter and the parties;
3. Assistance to the parties in objectively analyzing their matter; and
4. Persistence and effectiveness in creating and pursuing settlement options.”