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Hon. Etta O. Gillivan

San Diego Superior Court, Retired

After a decade as a Superior Court Commissioner on the San Diego County bench, Etta Gillivan has become an expert in managing the kinds of complex issues and emotions inherent in family law, probate, and other civil litigation. She has more than 15 years of experience as a private mediator, arbitrator and settlement judge.

Practice Areas

Family Law, Probate, Business/Commercial, Real Property, Homeowners Disputes, Employment and General Civil Litigation.

Conflict Resolution Experience

A former grade school teacher who left that profession to litigate family law cases, Commissioner Gillivan brings both her classroom and courtroom skills to her mediation practice. She is highly respected for her patience, empathy and even temperament as well as her knowledge of the legal issues at hand.

Commissioner Gillivan retired from the bench in 1999 and has since served as a settlement conference judge and judge pro tem in family law cases. She has also mediated and arbitrated a range of civil matters, including contract, homeowner association, and real estate disputes. She began her legal career in 1979 with a successful private practice in family law and was selected as a commissioner in 1989 by the San Diego bar because of her proficiency and excellent reputation. A trained mediator, Commissioner Gillivan serves on volunteer and professional

mediation panels and as a family law panelist for the Rutter Group, state and local bars, and other associations. She has served as an adjunct professor of law, teaching ADR, community property and family law courses, and has been published on those topics as well.

Organizations & Achievements

- Recipient, Madge Bradley Award, Lawyers Club of San Diego, North Chapter, 1999
- Recipient, American Jurisprudence Award, Remedies II, 1979
- Certified Family Law Specialist, California State Bar, 1987
- National Judicial College, Civil Mediation (1997), Teaching Assistant (2000)

Education & Training

- J.D., 1979, Thomas Jefferson University (formerly known as Western State University College of Law)
- B.A., 1965, Los Angeles State University

Judge Gillivan is available throughout Southern California.