



Judge Mary Thornton House retired from the Los Angeles Superior Court in September 2018, having served 22 years on the bench. She has started her third career as a private neutral for Alternative Resolution Centers (ARC). Starting out in the Pasadena Municipal Court handling criminal cases, Judge House quickly transitioned to civil and spent 8 years in probate assignments in Pasadena and the Stanley Mosk Courthouse. Judge House is also the author of Thomson Reuter's *California Civil Jury Instruction Companion Handbook*, updated yearly. As a mediator, the bulk of her cases involves trusts, wills, estates, and conservatorships, but she has had extensive experience resolving civil cases of all types as a mandatory settlement officer in Los Angeles' civil departments and as a mediator.

Prior to her appointment to the Pasadena Municipal Court in 1996 and subsequent elevation to the Superior Court in 2000, she was an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Los Angeles. She started out as a criminal prosecutor and then transferred to the civil branch to defend lawsuits against the City and its employees. In her last years prior to her appointment to the bench, she was General Counsel to the Los Angeles Police and Fire Departments, defending departmental policies, programs, and the Police and Fire Chiefs in both state and federal courts throughout California.

During her career on the court, Judge House presided over criminal, civil, and probate matters. She was also a Supervising Judge in two districts of the Los Angeles Superior Court (Northeast and North Central) and Assistant Supervising Judge for Civil, countywide. With the 2013 court reductions due to budget cuts, Judge House assumed additional responsibilities as the Supervising Judge of Hub Operations. She supervised the Unlawful Detainer, Collections, and Small Claims centralized hub courts throughout the County which are now recognized nationally as an efficient civil pathways protocol for the processing of civil matters.

In March 2004, Los Angeles County honored her as one of its 'Women of the Year' for her efforts on behalf of women's issues. In October 2004, she was recognized by the Pasadena Bar Association as their 'Judge of the Year.' In 2008, the California Judges Association awarded her the Bernard F. Jefferson's *Award for Excellence in Judicial Education*. In June 2010, she was elected and served for one year as Vice-President of the California Judges Association. In February 2011, the San Fernando Valley Bar Association awarded her the "Excellence in Judicial Administration" award.

In March 2013, the San Fernando Valley Bar Association named her their “2013 Judge of the Year.”

Judge House was the 2011 and 2012 Dean of California B.E. Witkin Judicial College which provides for education of all judicial officers in California. The college is a nationally recognized institution and exemplar for judicial education; she was an instructor and seminar leader 1997 to 2012.

Judge House was the chair of the Los Angeles Superior Court’s New Judge Orientation Committee, vice-chair of the Los Angeles Superior Court’s internal judicial education seminars, the JES Committee, and was the Vice-Chair of the California Judicial and Education Research Governing Committee for the California Judicial Council. She routinely teaches judges and lawyers throughout California on a variety of topics including electronic evidence, jury management, supported decision-making, conservatorships, trusts/wills and Expedited Jury Trials. She has been faculty for Glendale University College of Law, Pasadena City College, and adjunct faculty at the University of Southern California’s Gould School of Law, teaching Evidence and Criminal Procedure to the Masters of Law program students. In 2009, Judge House traveled to China at the request of Yale Law Center and the U.S. State Department to instruct China Judicial Officers on various topics.

She has been a contributor and consultant to California Continuing Education of the Bar Practice Guides and co-authored a chapter on “Judicial Perspective” in the Thomson/West Publication, *Overly on California Electronic Evidence, 2011-2012 Edition*.

Judge House is a past member of many California statewide committees. Of note, she served six years as a member of the California Judicial Council’s Civil and Small Claims Advisory Committee. Prior to leading the workgroup that was instrumental in passing the new Expedited Jury Trials legislation and court rules in 2010, she supervised the statewide conversion of legalistic pleading forms for small claims cases into a plain language format and was instrumental in the development of the universal judgment form in wide use today. She chaired a state-wide working group co-sponsored by the Judicial Council and the California Law Revision Commission established to recommend legislative and policy changes to the 3 Track Civil System that ultimately resulted in increasing the Small Claims monetary jurisdictional amounts in California. Through this committee work and experience on the bench, Judge House knows the value of cases for settlement purposes.

Judge House graduated from UCLA with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English in 1975. She received her Juris Doctorate from the University of San Diego in 1978. She plays the viola with the Pasadena Community Orchestra and occasionally is able to play with the Los Angeles Lawyer’s Philharmonic. She is President of ICAN Associates, a non-profit auxiliary to the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) promoting programs for the prevent of child abuse and treatment for child victims. She

is married to retired Los Angeles Fire Department Arson Investigator James Thornton and mother to Sarah and Kyle Thornton.