

VERDICTS & SETTLEMENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2026

Neutral Ellie K. Vilendrer brings business savvy and empathy to dispute resolution

Drawing on nearly two decades as a technology litigator, entrepreneur and corporate counsel, the Signature Resolution neutral combines business insight, meticulous preparation and a personal touch to resolve complex disputes.

By Shane Nelson

Special to the Daily Journal

Commercial litigator, outside general counsel, entrepreneur — Ellie K. Vilendrer has occupied many seats in the technology industry. That breadth of experience now informs her work as a private neutral, giving her a business-oriented perspective on resolving complex disputes.

“In tech disputes, the law, the technology and the business realities are all intertwined,” Vilendrer said. “And my background allows me to understand those layers and find practical solutions that account for all three.”

Vilendrer spent 19 years litigating commercial technology disputes, including 13 years running her own law firm. In 2013, she also co-founded a technology company that used machine learning to predict returns on investment in mobile applications.

“And I’ve served tech companies as outside general counsel, IP counsel and data privacy counsel — mostly for med tech companies, but also software companies,” she said.

Her interest in alternative dispute resolution dates to law school two decades ago, when a negotiation course sparked a passion for collaborative problem-solving.

“It really ignited a passion for problem-solving in me and value creation,” Vilendrer recalled. “That perspective was very, very meaningful. ... Then I went into litigation and did that for several years, and I just realized there was a better way to resolve disputes.”



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Vilendrer began incorporating ADR into her practice after launching Vilendrer Law in 2013. She became a full-time private neutral in August 2024, when she joined Signature Resolution.

“My philosophy is all based on efficient and effective dispute resolution,” she said. “It’s really what I live by and how I see my life’s purpose to really share this as a benefit to litigants. ... I’m exactly where I want to be.”

Vilendrer mediates commercial and technology disputes and serves on the American Arbitration Asso-

ciation’s commercial technology, healthcare and employment panels. She also works as a special master in mass tort proceedings involving survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Her experience with survivors began several years ago, when she served as settlement counsel in what she described as a high-profile and deeply troubling sexual assault case.

“Working with survivors has been the most meaningful part of my career,” she said. “And it really requires being trauma informed, being very sensitive and very emotionally aware.

Ellie K. Vilendrer

Signature Resolution
Los Angeles

Areas of Specialty:

Technology
Commercial
Data Privacy
IP
Sexual Assault
Class Actions
Mass Tort

... We need to be emotionally present and steady, create a safe and supportive environment and make survivors' well-being a priority."

That emphasis on empathy, careful listening and trust-building carries into her broader mediation practice.

Vilendrer typically begins working with attorneys well before a mediation session, conducting preliminary calls, identifying gaps in information and encouraging communication between opposing counsel.

"I do a lot of upfront work with pre-mediation calls and helping to ensure the parties have done a sufficient information exchange and just asking them what they need and helping to facilitate that," she explained.

She also encourages attorneys to speak directly before mediation, particularly when they have not previously worked together.

"I feel that humanizes the other side ... and helps them earn trust and relationship credit, which can be useful later on."

Chicago plaintiffs' attorney Jonathan M. Jagher, who recently retained Vilendrer to mediate a complex data privacy dispute, described her as "the best mediator I've ever had."

"She was very prepared going into the mediation, and she has a very deep sense of privacy class

actions, a great understanding of the law," Jagher said. "And to me, a great mediator ... is someone who is truly a neutral and can take the time to pick apart my case but also pick apart their defenses. And that's exactly what she did."

What particularly impressed Jagher, however, was Vilendrer's persistence after the initial mediation session.

"I've talked to her three or four times a week since we had the mediation in June," he said. "She calls me when she's on vacation. I call her when I'm on vacation. ... We're about to cross the finish line, I think, and it's because of her diligence, her hard work and her perseverance that the deal is actually getting done."

"We can talk about how hard we worked, but she's worked harder," he added. "She's been amazing."

Irvine business litigator Sharon Oh-Kubisch, who retained Vilendrer to resolve a contentious shareholder dispute, similarly praised her preparation and command of the issues.

"So, you want to be well prepared, too," Oh-Kubisch said. "She'll have read all the details in the briefs, and she's going to be asking insightful questions. You definitely won't be waiting for her to do the job. She'll already be engaged and ... attentive to all the issues that are being raised."

Oh-Kubisch said Vilendrer was willing to challenge both sides' positions while remaining engaged through difficult negotiations.

"We didn't always see the issues the same way, but I did appreciate that she remained engaged when there was some difficulty in some of the discussions," she said. "And we were eventually able to settle the matter, so I was really pleased with the actual end game for our client."

When disputes remain unresolved after mediation, Vilendrer sometimes arranges follow-up Zoom meetings that bring opposing attorneys together rather than continuing to shuttle proposals between them.

"Oftentimes, you can see breakthroughs when you get the attorneys together," she said. "I find that it can be transformative when ... their communications are face-to-face versus being shuttled through me."

Los Angeles plaintiffs' attorney Spencer R. Lucas, who worked with Vilendrer to resolve a high-profile sexual assault case involving numerous claimants, said her ability to connect with people distinguishes her from other neutrals.

"A lot of my practice is helping survivors of sexual trauma, and having a delicate touch is really important," Lucas said. "And Ellie had this

unbelievable ability of being sensitive and professional and helping the plaintiff feel comfortable, so they could share their story. I'd really never seen anything like it."

Lucas also praised Vilendrer's intelligence and extensive litigation experience. But he said her greatest strength was recognizing the human dimensions of disputes that can otherwise become consumed by legal arguments and settlement demands.

"Mediations can sometimes be so legally focused and concerned with dollars and cents and demands and offers that sometimes the clients' own story can get lost in the shuffle," Lucas said.

"And Ellie really cut through all of that in our case and had this amazing way of connecting with the clients that put them at ease so we could have a successful mediation process."

Here are some attorneys who have used Vilendrer's services: Spencer R. Lucas, Panish Shea Ravipudi LLP; Sharon Oh-Kubisch, Kahana & Feld LLP; Jonathan M. Jagher, Justice, Jagher, London & Millen LLC; Rachel A. Straus, Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP; Enoch Wang, Fife Law LLP

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