

Signature Resolution Welcomes Hon. Karen S. Crawford (Ret.) to Our Panel of Neutrals

Career litigator and former U.S. Magistrate Judge brings civil dispute expertise and uncompromising commitment to resolution.

SAN DIEGO, CA (October 5, 2026) — [Signature Resolution](#) is proud to announce that the Hon. Karen S. Crawford (Ret.) has joined our panel of neutrals, where she will serve as a mediator, arbitrator, special master, and discovery referee specializing in complex civil litigation, including commercial disputes, unfair business practices, intellectual property, mass tort, product liability, medical device litigation, medical malpractice, personal injury, and wrongful death. Judge Crawford arrives at the mediation table with a career that spans the full range of the civil litigation process, from trying cases for the United States at the Department of Justice to handling diverse civil cases as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, leading national multi-district litigation in private practice, and fourteen years presiding over a demanding federal civil docket as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Southern District of California. She is a mediator with an experienced and authoritative understanding of how consequential civil disputes arise, how they are effectively litigated, and how to reach resolution.

Before each session, Judge Crawford carefully evaluates every case and identifies the specific issues important to each party. She then engages with each party directly, discussing both the substance of the arguments raised and the desired outcomes. She carefully listens to what their goals are. She is direct with parties, advising them about the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments, what their case is realistically worth, and what lies ahead if the case remains unresolved. She frames her discussions based on her knowledge of the law, and a career as a seasoned litigator and jurist. The combination of preparation, candor, and substantive authority is what effectively moves parties from their opening positions to a signed agreement.

Judge Crawford began her legal career as a Trial Attorney in the Torts Branch of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., trying mass tort cases for the United States in multi-district proceedings across the country. She joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Diego as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, where her practice expanded to include constitutional torts, personal injury and wrongful death, road design, vaccine litigation, and medical malpractice. Upon entering private practice, she served as national litigation counsel to an international latex glove manufacturer in federal multi-district and state coordinated products liability proceedings spanning multiple jurisdictions, building legal teams responsible for ensuring strategic consistency. She chaired the litigation group at Duane Morris in San Diego before her appointment to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in March 2012, where she served as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for fourteen years, including as Presiding U.S. Magistrate Judge from 2024 to 2025.

"Judge Crawford brings substantive command of complex civil litigation and a direct, tenacious approach that gets cases to the finish line," said Dario Higuchi, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Signature Resolution. "We are proud to welcome her to our panel."

Throughout her career, Judge Crawford has actively participated in the American Inns of Court, founding and leading chapters in Pittsburgh and San Diego, serving as a President, Master Board Member and founding member of the Hon. J. Clifford Wallace Chapter, President, Master and Board Member of the Louis M. Welsh Chapter, Member, Board Member and founding member of the San Diego Intellectual Property Inn of Court, and founding member, Master and Board Member of the Hay-Sell (formerly Pittsburgh) Chapter. She also served as a Trustee and Secretary of the American Inns of Court Foundation Board of Trustees. She received the Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award in 2024, and the A. Sherman Christensen Award in 1998 from the national American Inns of Court, and the Director's Award for Superior Performance from the U.S. Department of Justice in 1989. She is a member of the Lawyers Club, and the Association of Business Trial Lawyers Judicial Advisory Board.

Judge Crawford earned her Juris Doctor from California Western School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts from Boston University.

To learn more about Hon. Karen S. Crawford (Ret.), please visit: [LINK](#)

About Signature Resolution

Founded in 2017 in the heart of Los Angeles, Signature Resolution comprises a panel of distinguished neutrals hailing from diverse backgrounds, including respected judges and trial attorneys specializing in virtually every civil practice area. The founding partners inaugurated the organization with a vision of providing the highest level of service and convenience for attorneys and their clients. Signature Resolution's panelists offer unrivaled expertise and commitment to resolve even the most challenging legal matters. In addition to the Los Angeles location, Signature Resolution also has offices across California. For more information about the firm's mediation, arbitration, and other dispute resolution services, visit signatureresolution.com.