



Ralph E. Hughes, Esq.

Overview

I am maintaining my practice, but I am extremely happy to be working with West Coast Resolution Group. I love to be involved in mediation, and I think that I have an ability to work with people, to hear their stories and concerns, and to assist them in resolving their conflicts. I tend to follow the traditional approach to mediation, which is to start with everyone in the same room, then go into breakout rooms. However, I can be flexible as required.

Rates

- \$475 per hour
- \$195 administrative fee per party

Legal Career & Prior Experience

Early in my career, I was assigned to work on the probate of a travel agent who was murdered by his fifth wife. Several previous wives filed claims, and a baby was presented as the child of the murderess, therefore as an alleged pretermitted heir. During years of administration, we sold several pieces of real property, litigated many claims, endured an audit of the 706, and sued a bank in Switzerland from which the murderess had stolen money. Ultimately, we proved that – not only had the decedent not fathered the alleged child – but the murderess was not even the child’s mother! From that point on, I have concentrated my practice on estate planning and probate litigation.

I have drafted trusts. I have administered trusts and probates. I have completed estate tax returns and I have participated in audits. I have tried cases, and I have been involved in almost every sort of probate or trust dispute there is.

Education & Professional Affiliations

I graduated from the University of Denver in 1973. I went straight to law school and graduated from Berkeley Law at UC Berkeley in 1976. After graduating, I came straight to San Diego. For a while, I thought that I would become a tax lawyer, and I completed about half of the course work for an LLM in Tax at the University of San Diego before I thought better of it. I have spoken at many continuing education programs. I was an adjunct professor at California Western School of Law for most of 20 years, where I taught “Estate Planning Practicum.”

I have been active in the probate bar in San Diego. I was on the Legal Specialization Committee of the State Bar for several years. I am a member of the Trusts and Estates Executive Committee of the California Lawyers Association. I am a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC).

ADR Experience & Specialties

I became involved in mediation early, and I took one of the first mediation courses offered in San Diego. For well over a decade, I have represented parties in mediations, and I have conducted mediations – always in the fields of probate, estate planning, or trust and estate litigation.

Hobbies & Interests

My favorite hobby is skiing. Every year, I try to get in as many days of skiing as I can – a job that is not so easy for a person living in San Diego. I am learning German. I love to read. I have practiced yoga for many years. From time to time, I go to the sea for some sportfishing.

To schedule a mediation, please contact Case Manager Kathy Purcell at 619-238-7282 or kpurcell@westcoastresolution.com.