



Superior Court of California County of Riverside

4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Contact: Richard T. Fields, Presiding Judge

(951) 955-5536

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<http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/newsmedia/newsmedia.htm>)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT ANNOUNCES NEW CIVIL MEDIATION PROGRAM AND STRAUS INSTITUTE MEDIATION TRAINING

RIVERSIDE COUNTY: With the fewest number of judges per 100,000 population of the 15 most populous counties in the state, resolution of civil cases is critical to Riverside County Superior Court in managing its growing workload.

The court continues to make extraordinary progress in adjudicating civil cases throughout the county. As of July 25, over half of the 625 civil cases set for trial during the first seven months of this year have already been adjudicated. Of the 353 cases adjudicated there were 106 judgments, 154 cases dismissed, and 93 settlements.

To further provide access and early disposition of cases, the court is pleased to announce that in 2009 a new Civil Mediation Program will be implemented.

The court will establish a new Civil Mediation Panel and encourages attorney-mediators interested in participating on the panel to attend a mediation training program offered by the renowned Pepperdine University School of Law, Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. The training will be offered for the first time in Riverside County this November. Applications for the training will be available on the court's website in the coming weeks.

Pursuant to Title IV of its Local Rules, the court recently adopted a Mandatory Mediation Program for certain civil cases valued at \$50,000 and under, and the court expects litigants in all civil cases to attempt a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) as early in the case as possible. "Judges, court staff, and lawyers throughout Riverside County have shown tremendous support for ADR because it offers civil litigants effective and tailor-made options for resolving their disputes," said Barrie J. Roberts, the court's ADR Director. "Mediation is one option that can save litigants time, money, and stress while helping them create agreements that meet their unique concerns, including preserving relationships which are often destroyed during litigation and trial. The process requires well-trained, highly skilled professionals, which is why the court is so fortunate to have the Straus Institute inaugurate our panel."

Presiding Judge Richard T. Fields added, “The court is very excited to be moving forward with the new Civil Mediation Program. While still in its developmental stage, the program demonstrates the court’s ongoing commitment to providing access to the county’s civil litigants.”

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