WAMS

WASHINGTON ARBITRATION & MEDIATION SERVICE



Hon. Gretchen Leanderson (Ret.)

MEDIATOR • ARBITRATOR

EXPERTISE AREAS

- General Civil & Tort Litigation
- Employment Discrimination
- Governmental & Public Agency
- Commercial & Contract Disputes
- Guardianship & Elder Law
- Family Law

EDUCATION

- National Judicial College Civil Mediator Training Program, 2024
- Center for Dispute Resolution Mediator Training Program, Boulder, CO, 2003
- University of Puget Sound School of Law, J.D., 1987
- University of Washington, B.A. Business, 1981

AFFILIATIONS

- Washington Arbitration & Mediation Service
- WSBA, Alternative Dispute Resolution Section
- Tacoma Pierce County Bar Association
- Hon. Robert J. Bryan Inns of Court, Emeritus
- Washington Women Lawyers
- Pierce County Superior Court, Presiding Judge Juvenile Court, 2018-19
- Superior Court Judges' Association, co-chair Family and Juvenile Law Committee, 2017-19
- Judicial College Faculty for Civil Trial Practice, 2016-19.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Judge Gretchen Leanderson brings nearly 40 years of experience as a trial judge and civil litigator to mediation and arbitration. She retired January 1, 2025, after 10 years on the Pierce County Superior Court bench, where she presided over complex civil matters including multi-plaintiff personal injury, medical malpractice, employment, commercial contract, real property, homeowner association, and complex family law cases.

Before her 2014 appointment, Judge Leanderson served 27 years as an Assistant Attorney General. She litigated before numerous tribunals, including the Office of Administrative Hearings, Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals, and Superior Courts in King, Pierce, Mason, Clark, Whatcom, and Thurston Counties. Her appellate practice included Divisions I and II of the State Court of Appeals and the State Supreme Court. Early in her career, Judge Leanderson defended regulatory cases involving nursing homes, adult family homes, and assisted living facilities. In the Torts Division, she handled complex tort litigation, including multi-plaintiff negligence and employment discrimination cases, successfully resolving many matters through early resolution and formal mediation.

Judge Leanderson served as Treasurer of Washington Women Lawyers (2012–2014), co-president of its Pierce County chapter (2011–2012), and received the WWL Legacy Award in 2016. She also co-chaired the WSBA Professionalism Committee (2011–2012) and has regularly presented on ethics and professionalism.

Her facilitated-resolution experience began in 2003 through the Attorney General's Torts Division early resolution program. On the bench, she continued promoting early resolution through settlement conferences. She understands litigation's cost in time, money, and emotional toll, and brings both judicial and litigation experience to the facilitative process.