



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Diego Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Barton Retires

April 21, 2021 – Judge Jeffrey B. Barton will officially retire from the San Diego Superior Court today. Judge Barton served 20 years on the bench and had assignments in civil, family and criminal law.

“Serving the San Diego public as a judge has been a great privilege and honor, said Judge Barton. “The opportunity to give all members of the public a full, fair and unbiased opportunity to have their cases heard was the greatest experience of my professional life.”

Judge Barton joined the court after 20 years in private practice representing medical providers and other professionals. He was elected a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), an association of skilled civil trial attorneys, in 1995.

Soon after joining the court in 2001, he began a rotation in family law in Vista and downtown San Diego. Judge Barton found the family law assignment one of the most meaningful in the court. “In family court, you encounter people going through one of the most emotional and difficult periods of their lives. Most do not have attorneys, and services are limited to help solve problems for the litigants, and most importantly, for their children,” said Judge Barton. “Helping families through this transition is one the most valuable and rewarding experiences you can have as a judge.”

As a result of his early involvement in family law, Judge Barton volunteered to cover family law calendar departments and hear family law trials and settlement conferences during his last six years on the bench.

Judge Barton spent 14 years of his career presiding over civil cases and six years as the Civil Supervising Judge for the Court. He heard some of the largest and most sensitive cases in San Diego during his time as a Civil Independent Calendar Judge. He conducted over 200 civil jury trials and hundreds of settlement conferences and law and motion hearings.

During this time, Judge Barton co-led the effort with the court’s Executive Team and staff to transition the civil and family courts from paper-based systems to an electronic digital court. During the pandemic, the benefits of these changes greatly enhanced the ability of the court to provide online services to the public.

In 2014, Judge Barton was elected by his peers to become the assistant presiding judge of the San Diego Superior Court, and in 2016, he assumed the presiding judge role. In 2016, he was elected by the 58 presiding judges throughout the State of California to serve as the chair of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee (TCPJAC). As TCPJAC Chair, Judge Barton was charged with advocating for the trial courts with the Legislature and Executive branch. One memorable experience was a planned meeting with then-Governor Jerry Brown that was scheduled for 20 minutes and resulted in a wide-ranging discussion lasting 90 minutes. During this time, he also served as an advisory member of the Judicial Council of California, the governing body for the statewide court system.

“In addition to being an excellent trial judge in the civil, family and criminal divisions, Judge Barton made an immeasurable impact during his service as our presiding judge which coincided with the final two years of construction on the new Central Courthouse in downtown San Diego,” said San Diego Superior Court Presiding Judge Lorna Alksne. “Through his excellent management skills, he oversaw the completion of the 22-story building, including the moves of more than 60 judges and hundreds of employees.”

Judge Barton trained locally for his career receiving his B.A. from UCSD (magna cum laude) in 1978. He received his J.D. from the USD School of Law in 1981 during which time he served as an articles editor of the Law Review.

In retirement, Judge Barton plans to spend time playing with his grandchildren and traveling with his wife. He is also looking forward to mid-day surf sessions for the first time in decades. He plans to continue working in the private sector as a mediator handling family and civil cases.

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