

California Practice Guide

FAMILY LAW

CHAPTERS 1-5

JUDGE WILLIAM P. HOGOBOOM (Ret.)

Former Supervising Judge
Family Law Dept.
Los Angeles Superior Court

JUSTICE DONALD B. KING (Ret.)

California Court of Appeal
1st Dist., Div. 5

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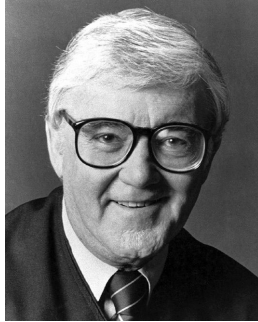


LINDA DIAMOND RAZNICK

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

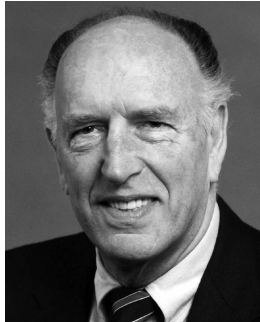


IN MEMORIAM

Judge William P. Hogoboom (Ret.), authored the first edition of this Practice Guide in 1981 and remained actively involved with its annual revisions until his death in 2003.

Judge Hogoboom was Supervising Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court Family Law Department for two years, and also served as Assistant Presiding Judge and Presiding Judge of that Court. He taught family law courses at USC Law Center and Whittier College of Law, served on the faculty of the California Judges College, and participated on Rutter Group family law seminar panels for many years.

Judge Hogoboom's insight, wisdom and friendship are deeply missed.



IN MEMORIAM

Justice Donald B. King (Ret.), former Associate Justice of the First District Court of Appeal in San Francisco, co-authored this Practice Guide and remained actively involved with its annual revisions until his death in 2025.

Recognized as a leading family law authority, Justice King authored more published opinions than any appellate justice in California's history.

Justice King also served over six years as Presiding Judge of the San Francisco Superior Court Family Law Department and was the only appellate court justice with a blanket assignment by the Chief Justice to the Superior Court, where he handled family law cases at the trial level.

Justice King received many awards during his lifetime, including Family Law Judicial Officer of the Year by the State Bar. Upon his retirement from the Court of Appeal, the State Bar honored him by renaming this prestigious award the "Justice Donald B. King Family Law Judicial Officer of the Year Award." And, in 2005, Justice King was the recipient of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Family Law Section's Spencer Brandeis Award.

Following his retirement from the bench in 1996, Justice King provided all types of private dispute resolution, including mediation, case management and trial (as a judge pro tem) of family law cases. Beginning in 2008, he served as a volunteer settlement judge for the Sonoma County Superior Court and continued to be a consultant for Rutter Group family law programs.

Justice King's expertise, knowledge and ongoing support are deeply missed.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS



Michael Asimow is Distinguished Professor of Administrative Law, Santa Clara Law School, and Professor of Law Emeritus, UCLA School of Law. Professor Asimow is responsible for the Practice Guide's tax-related materials. He has authored numerous articles and publications in the tax field and lectures regularly at Rutter Group programs on federal tax topics. He also is the co-author of *California Practice Guide: Administrative Law*.



Bruce E. Cooperman, a partner at Wasser, Cooperman & Mandles in Los Angeles, is a Certified Family Law Specialist and practices family law exclusively. He received his J.D. at UCLA in 1977, where he was also Order of the Coif. Mr. Cooperman has extensive experience in the litigation of complex high asset and high income cases. He has lectured extensively on a variety of family law topics. Mr. Cooperman has served as Chair of the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles County Family Law Section and as President of the Southern California Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. He has been listed for many years in the Best Lawyers in America publication, and has been named Los Angeles Family Lawyer of the Year by that publication on three occasions, the most recent being for the year 2024. In 2024, Mr. Cooperman was the recipient of the Spencer Brandeis Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Los Angeles County Bar Association Family Law Section. In 2025 and 2026, Mr. Cooperman was recognized by the Los Angeles Daily Journal as one of the State's top family law attorneys. He has been designated as a Super Lawyer for many years, and has been the recipient of the 2019 AAML Southern California Family Law Person of the Year award. Mr. Cooperman is responsible for the Practice Guide's premarital, marital and marital settlement agreement materials.



Hon. Anne Kiley is a Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, assigned to the family law division at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse. Prior to being appointed as a judicial officer, Judge Kiley was a Certified Family Law Specialist, Certified by the State Bar of California, and a partner of and head of the family law department at Elkins Kalt in Century City.

Judge Kiley has been an adjunct professor of law at the University of Southern California Gould Law School, where she taught Family Law and Community Property courses. In addition, Judge Kiley serves as Program Director for CFLR and as such teaches multiple courses, including the annual **Family Law Refresher Course**, the **Advanced Family Law Course** and trial advocacy programs.

Judge Kiley is a contributing author to Chapters 5 through 7 of the Practice Guide.



Christopher C. Melcher CFLS-CALS, is dual specialized in family law and appellate law, and a founding partner of Walzer Melcher & Yoda LLP. His practice focuses on the financial aspects of divorce, litigation regarding premarital agreements, and international family law. He is a Fellow of the AAML and served as Chair of the State Bar of California Family Law Section for the 2011-2012 term. He has presented over 200 continuing legal education programs and published books and articles on family law.

PREFACE

This Practice Guide is written with the intent to provide step-by-step guidance through the ever-changing field of domestic relations practice.

Family law lawyers must be familiar with a wide spectrum of substantive and procedural law and must stay on top of a growing mountain of statewide and local procedural rules. We explain the statutes, rules and cases, and offer our analysis of the many lingering issues. We include “practice pointers,” tactical considerations and essential forms to suggest the best way of getting from starting point to destination. Our goal is to provide you with the practical “know how” you need to serve your clients with competence and confidence.

This Practice Guide has gone through evolutionary change since its first publication in 1981. With the enactment of the Family Code and its ongoing amendments, we continue to rewrite the text to bring you up-to-date roadmaps through the difficult terrain of family law practice. We will, of course, keep this book current in the years to come to catch new trends as they develop.

Special thanks to our contributing authors and to the many California appellate justices, superior court judges and attorneys who, through their participation in Rutter Group Family Law programs, have helped us improve the coverage and practical guidance offered in the text.

Finally, our thanks to you, the practitioners, for your comments and suggestions in helping us keep the Practice Guide on target. With your input, this Practice Guide achieves its aim of making life a little easier for all of us!

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