



Colorado Justice: Celebrating 42 years of fair
and impartial courts through merit selection

news

Colorado Judicial Branch
Mary J. Mullarkey, Chief Justice
Gerald Marroney, State Court Administrator

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Contact: Robert McCallum or Jon Sarché
303-837-3633
303-837-3644
robert.mccallum@judicial.state.co.us
jon.sarche@judicial.state.co.us

Sixteenth Judicial District to have mediator assigned to the district *Otero County judge to serve as district's Office of Dispute Resolution mediator*

DENVER – For the first time in recent years, Colorado's 16th Judicial District (Bent, Crowley and Otero counties) will have a mediator assigned to handle cases within the district. Otero County Judge Douglas R. Manley, who has received specific training for the task, will serve as mediator for two days per month, initially.

Judge Manley will primarily work on domestic relations cases, but could handle other types of cases as the District Court judges deem appropriate, mediating three to five cases per month through the Office of Dispute Resolution. On average in Colorado, 64 percent of domestic relations cases are resolved in mediation, an alternative dispute-resolution process that can help reduce court caseloads by resolving cases outside the courtroom.

“We believe mediation empowers the parties to reach mutually acceptable agreements that are more durable, not only saving the court time with the initial filing, but decreasing future court time with fewer motions to modify,” said Chad Hessel, regional administrator for the Office of Dispute Resolution.

Judge Manley was appointed as a part-time Otero County judge on July 2, 2004, generally serving four days per week on the bench. He has maintained a limited private practice. He received his law degree from the University of Colorado and worked as a prosecutor in the 16th

Judicial District from 1978-82. After that, he had a private practice in La Junta and has served as municipal judge in several communities.