

STEVE NELSON

ADR

Dallas, Texas

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ADR Experience

- Began ADR Practice in 1985
- Completed training with:
 - U.S. Arbitration & Mediation Services
 - Attorney Mediator Institute
 - Dallas Bar Association
 - American Arbitration Association
 - Association of Attorney Mediators
 - Texas Mediators Credentialing Association
 - University of Texas Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution
 - Dispute Review Board Foundation
- Mediated over 2,000 construction-related disputes, including:
 - Civil/Commercial/Industrial construction disputes
 - Government Contract Disputes
 - Construction Defect Claims
 - Architect/Engineer Professional Liability Cases
 - Surety Claims/Disputes
 - Construction Insurance Coverage Issues
- Specializes in multi-party mediations
- Developed a double-blind mediation and escrow settlement technique

Education Credentials

- B.A. in Economics, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas (1972)
- Juris Doctor (J.D.), Dedman School of Law, Southern Methodist University (1976)
- Adjunct Faculty Member, Graduate Engineering School, University of Texas at Austin (since 1999)
- Instructor, Level II Claims Course, National Association of Surety Bond Producers Surety School (taught for ten years)

Work Experience

- Construction and surety attorney, Dallas-based "Big-Law" firm (1975-1995)
 - Chaired the construction and surety practice
- CEO, ENR Top 100 General Contractor, Austin, Texas (1995-2001)
 - Also served as de facto general counsel for sister companies involved in mechanical, clean room, road & bridge construction
- Chief Claims Officer, SureTec Insurance Company, a Texas-domiciled surety company (2001-2017)
 - Continued after its acquisition by Markel Corp (2017-2024)
- ADR Provider, Markel Corporation (2001-present)
 - Sole ADR practitioner serving third parties in a 20,000+ employee global insurance holding company

Professional Recognition

- Board Certified in Construction Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization
- Fellow, American College of Construction Lawyers
- Distinguished Fellow, International Academy of Mediators
- Distinguished Credentialed Mediator, Texas Mediator Credentialing Association
- Credentialed Distinguished Mediator, Association of Attorney-Mediators
- Academy Member, National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals
- Chaired the Construction Law Sections of:
 - Dallas Bar Association
 - Austin Bar Association
 - State Bar of Texas

Steve Nelson | Construction ADR Specialist

Steve Nelson is an ADR professional with close to 50 years of experience in handling high-exposure and complex, often multi-party, construction and construction-related cases.

Steve began his construction law career in 1975 with an eight-lawyer law firm in Dallas, Texas, that grew to over two hundred lawyers by the time he left in 1995. He chaired the firm's construction and surety practice for most of that time.

Leadership in Construction and Surety Industries

In 1995, Steve accepted a position as CEO of an ENR Top 100 size general contractor in Austin, Texas. While serving in that role, he was also the de facto general counsel for its sister companies involved in mechanical contracting, high purity process piping, clean room construction, bridge and road work, and concrete pumping.

In 2001, Steve left the construction company to help start up a Texas-domiciled surety company. He was its chief claims officer from the time it wrote its first bond, through that company's acquisition in 2017 by Markel Corp, a Fortune 500 insurance company, until he transitioned his claims duties to his successor in early 2024. He continues to be employed by Markel Corporation and is a one-person ADR practice within a 20,000+ employee global insurance holding company.

Extensive Mediation Experience

Steve began mediating in 1985, having taken his initial mediation training with U.S. Arbitration & Mediation Services, and advanced courses with the Attorney Mediator Institute, the Dallas Bar Association, the American Arbitration Association, the Association of Attorney Mediators, and the Texas Mediators Credentialing Association.

He continued mediating after he left his law firm, while in his CEO capacity at the construction company, and throughout his career in the surety business. For the past ten years, Steve has devoted 70% of his time to mediation and other ADR processes, and 100% in recent years. Steve has conducted well over two thousand mediations in his career. All were civil/commercial construction disputes, construction defect claims, architect/engineer professional liability, or surety-related. He has extensive experience in multi-party (10+ parties) cases, having developed a particularly effective technique using double-blind mediation and settlement through escrow to help settle those cases.

Professional Recognition and Credentials

Steve's experience and professionalism have been recognized by his peers, the construction and surety industries, and the State Bar of Texas. He is Board Certified in Construction Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. He is a Fellow of the American College of Construction Lawyers, a Distinguished Fellow of the International Academy of Mediators, a Distinguished Credentialed Mediator by the Texas Mediator Credentialing Association, a Credentialed Distinguished Mediator of the Association of Attorney-Mediators, and an Academy Member of the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals.

He has chaired the Construction Law Sections of the Dallas Bar Association, the Austin Bar Association, and the State Bar of Texas.

Teaching and Education

Steve has taught a graduate-level course in Construction Industry Dispute Resolution in the Graduate Engineering School at the University of Texas at Austin every year since 1999 and taught the Level II Claims Course at the National Association of Surety Bond Producers Surety School for ten years.

Steve is a 1972 graduate of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, with a B.A. in Economics, and received his Juris Doctor degree in 1976 from the Dedman School of Law at Southern Methodist University.

Personal Life

Steve and his wife, Betsy, live in Dallas, Texas. They have four grown children, eight wonderful grandchildren, and four dogs. Outside activities include travel, family history research, and genealogy.