



Holly Christine Panetta

Holly Panetta is a mediator, child and family investigator, parenting coordinator, and educator with experience working in higher education, government, and court administration.

PROFILE

Hometown:

Longmont

Law School:

University of Denver Sturm
College of Law

Lives in:

Denver

Works at:

Peak Empowerment LLC;
Colorado State University
(Adjunct Faculty)

Practice Area(s):

Alternative Dispute
Resolution and Mediation

CBA Member Since:

2004

Describe yourself in five words:

Curious, measured, independent, steady, and
compassionate.

Why did you become a lawyer?

I was working for an independent Booksellers Association during the late 1990s when our organization became tangentially involved in a lawsuit to block a big-name bookstore from purchasing a major book distributing company. I was fascinated by the process and the collective persuasion of the independent bookstores and bookseller associations, which ultimately stopped the sale from going through. I applied to law school with the intention of working in book-publishing law. Twenty years later, I have enjoyed a rich and diverse career in alternative dispute resolution, working with individuals, families, and businesses (not books!).

What's the best advice you've received?

Don't make assumptions; ask questions.

What do you like most about your practice area?

One of the most rewarding parts of my work is getting to witness those magical moments when people truly experience a transformation from viewing conflict as a stressor to recognizing it as an opportunity to create new beginnings or improved relationships. As a mediator, my role is to provide a calm and safe environment where parties are empowered and encouraged to create this magic.

What organizations are you involved in?

I've been affiliated with the Colorado Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) since 2005. I served as an ODR project manager and director from 2010 to 2016, and I've also served as a contract mediator for the organization for more than 10 years. I'm

currently a member of the CBA ADR Section's executive council.

If you weren't a lawyer, you'd be?

I'd likely still be working somewhere in the book publishing industry! Alternatively, I may have explored using my MS degree in human development and family studies to become a therapist.

What is the most random job you've ever had?

One summer during college I worked as a flagger for road construction crews. I developed a seriously impressive forearm tan!

How do you find work/life balance?

I put myself first by exercising every morning, period. Some days it may be an hour or more; other days I might squeeze in just 10 to 15 minutes. By getting in some form of exercise each morning, I have accomplished one positive, healthy thing no matter what else happens throughout the day.

When you aren't working, how do you like to spend your time?

I hike and love to go to concerts, especially at Red Rocks! I practice yoga and am an avid Peloton user (#MileHighHolly). I have two daughters, a dog, and a cat, and recently became a foster at a dog rescue. I enjoy podcasts, books, music, and film. I am genuinely curious about the human condition, so I am drawn to memoirs, biographies, documentaries, and moody song lyrics.

What is one thing that you wish you had known in your first year of practice?

Prioritizing your health and well-being is not selfish. Everything you do in life improves when you take care of yourself. 

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