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2024 TOP FAMILY LAWYERS



Mark E. Minyard

MINYARD
MORRIS

NEWPORT
BEACH

Mark E. Minyard said starting to practice family law was by accident. That was nearly half a century ago.

“This is my 48th year and I am enjoying my practice more than ever,” Minyard said. “I enjoy creatively solving client’s problems and the complexity of most cases and I have the good fortune to work with a great set of clients.”

During that time, Minyard and his firm have established some house rules. One is that they will not allow clients to retain them upon their first meeting. Another is restricting his practice to family law cases filed in Orange County.

Minyard himself focuses primarily on complex, high-net-worth cases involving a business interest.

He recently handled two matters where both clients had substantial assets that were essentially 100% separate property.

“In both cases, the clients had acquired some of the assets during the marriages, which then allowed the other side to rely on Family Code section 760 and forced us to prove that the assets were the separate

property of my clients,” Minyard said. “After significant fees were incurred and just prior to trial, both opponents dropped their claims relative to the separate property. Both trials ended up being about spousal support in long-term marriages and some other minor issues.”

He said the main challenges in both cases were dealing with opponents who sought to extract a large settlement by simply refusing to accept the inevitable.

“Their strategies were simply to refuse to settle the issue in the belief that we would settle rather than do the work that needed to be done to overcome the community property presumption,” Minyard said.

Discussing trends within family law, Minyard noted an emerging technology that could be impactful as in many different professions.

“AI will change the practice in ways that we may not even foresee and certainly ethics will be involved,” Minyard said. “It is likely AI will change family law less than most other areas of law, but it will still have an impact.”