

Judge Elizabeth J. Berns

Judge Berns is a native to Seattle and graduated from the University of Washington in 1989 with a B.S. in Environmental Health and Law. Before beginning her legal career, Judge Berns was a research scientist and author in the field of chemistry and indoor air pollution. Her concern for the rights of others as a result of contamination issues brought her to the University of Puget Sound School of Law, where she received her J.D. in 1993.

Judge Berns began her legal career working with the State Attorney General's Office, Division of Labor & Industries, doing workers' compensation law. She then opened her own practice where she spent the next 19 years supporting individuals, families, and businesses in the areas of workers' compensation, estate planning and probate, business and intellectual property, and family law.

In 2009, she began serving her community as a Pro Tem Judge in municipal courts and King County District Court, and as a Pro Tem Commissioner in King County Superior Court in the Ex Parte Department. Judge Berns joined the King County Superior Court Bench in January 2013.

Judge Berns has been active in the LGBTQ community helping others understand domestic violence and sexual assault within that community. She has co-authored a chapter on LGBTQ Minorities and Sexual Offenses in the Sexual Offense Bench Guide for Judges, and a chapter on LGBTQ DV in the Domestic Violence Manual for Judges. She is the Project Chair for the King County Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Coordinated Response Oversight Committee, and is on faculty for the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges for judicial education programs entitled "Enhancing Judicial Skills in Domestic Violence Cases."