

Honorable Manuel I. Arrieta
District Judge, Third Judicial District Court, Division I
201 West Picacho
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005



Biography:

The Hon. Manuel I. Arrieta is a state district judge sitting with the Third Judicial District court for the State of New Mexico in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Judge Arrieta was appointed by Governor Bill Richardson on January 16, 2009. Prior to his appointment, Judge Arrieta practiced for 25 years in the area of civil litigation in southern New Mexico. For 16 of those years, he worked for major law firms in the area of insurance defense and in other civil matters. In the last 9 years before his appointment, Judge Arrieta worked as a sole practitioner in the field of plaintiff's personal injury.

Judge Arrieta is a graduate of New Mexico State University where he received an Associate Degree in Radiologic Technology and a Bachelors in Business Administration degree in 1981. Judge Arrieta is a graduate of the University of Michigan School of Law where he received his law degree in 1984. He served as a law clerk at the Court of Appeals for the State of New Mexico (1984-1985) prior to entering the private practice of law.

Prior to his appointment, Judge Arrieta was a volunteer member of the Disciplinary Board Hearing Committee for the New Mexico Disciplinary Board. During his years in the law practice and afterwards, Judge Arrieta has been active in the local community through his participation in Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Las Cruces Homeless Legal Clinic, New Mexico High School Mock Trials, League of United Latin American Citizens, Young Executives for the Memorial Medical Foundation, Inc., and through numerous other activities and agencies.

Judge Arrieta was born in Deming, New Mexico and was raised and educated in the Mesilla Valley. Judge Arrieta grew up working on the farms

of the Mesilla Valley while attending the local public schools. In 1981, Judge Arrieta graduated as a Crimson Scholar from NMSU and was then accepted into the University of Michigan School of Law. Judge Arrieta is the proud father of three grown children who have attended schools and universities in southern New Mexico.

Education and Degrees

High School: Las Cruces High School 1973-1976
College: New Mexico State Univ. 1976-1981; Assoc. degree in Radiologic Technology (1978) and Bachelors in Business Administration with minor in Economics (1981)
Law School: The University of Michigan School of Law (1984); Juris Doctorate

Work Experience

District Court Judge, Div. I, February 2009 to present
Chief Judge, May 2019 to present
Water Law Judge for Third Judicial District, February 2012 to present
Designated Climate Science Judge for NM, December 2021 to present
Third Judicial District Court
201 W. Picacho Ave.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

September 4, 2001 through 2009
The Arrieta Law Firm, P.C.
P.O. Box 2737
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88004
Sole practitioner in civil practice

September 1994 through September 2001
Miller., Stratvert & Torgerson, P.A. (Las Cruces branch)
P.O. Box 1209, Las Cruces, NM 88004
Partner

December 1985 through August 1994
Weinbrenner, Richards, Paulowsky, Ramirez & Sandenaw P.A.
500 South Main, Ste 606 , Las Cruces, NM 88001
Partner

September 1984 through September 1985
Court of Appeals for the State of New Mexico
P.O. Box 2008, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Law clerk to the Hon. Wm Bivins

September 1976 through August 1981
Memorial Medical Center
2450 S. Telshor, Las Cruces, NM 88011
Radiologic Technologist

Bar Admissions

September 1984, New Mexico.

Civic, Community and Professional Activities:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Las Cruces, Board member 1987-1989

Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility, part-time staff instructor,
paralegal program, 1987-1989.

Dona Ana Community Branch; part-time staff instructor, paralegal program,
1988-1991.

Young Executives, Memorial Medical Center, Inc. Foundation, member 1991-
1994

New Mexico Defense Lawyer's Association, Amicus brief contributor

New Mexico High School Mock Trial Program, regional judge, 1993, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2021

Las Cruces Homeless Legal Clinic, through the NM State Bar, pro bono attorney, providing services to the homeless; April 2006 - January 2008

Desert Humanitarians, Inc., pro bono attorney, providing pro bono legal services to a humanitarian border group, July 2006- August 2007

New Mexico State Bar, volunteer hearing member for the Disciplinary Board, 2005- 2009

New Mexico Trial Lawyer's Assoc., member, 2001- 2009

American Trial Lawyer's Association, member 2001- 2009

League of United Latin American Citizens, member, 2006 - present

Hispanic National Bar Association, member, 2006- 2009

Voter Protection Steering Committee, Dona Ana County, member, 2000-2009

Volunteer Legal counsel to Dona Ana Democratic Party, 2000-2009

Speaker and Committees:

Speaker, the Washington State Trial Lawyer's Association seminar, Lisbon, Portugal, September 18-20, 2006; "Litigation in the 21st Century".

Speaker, the Washington State Trial Lawyer's Association seminar, Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 12-14, 2009; "Litigation Strategies".

Panel Member, Justice Matters - 2010 National LULAC convention, Albuquerque, NM, July 15, 2010.

Speaker, What Civil Judges Want You to Know - National Business Institute, Las Cruces, NM, November 28, 2012.

Speaker, Building Your Civil Trial Skills - National Business Institute, Las Cruces, NM, February 27, 2013.

Panel Member, Technology in the Courts - State Bar of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, December 9, 2014.

Panelist, “As Judges See It (The Best and Worst Practices)” - National Business Institute, Las Cruces, NM , November-December, 2014 through 2017.

Speaker, “Catch Up & Keep Up” – NM Virtual Judicial Conclave”, September 23, 2021.

Panelist, “The Judges' View: New Mexico Civil Litigation Do's and Don'ts” – National Business Institute, Las Cruces, NM, November 17, 2021.

Member, SIM (Sequential Intercept Model) Task Force, May 2022 to present.

Member, Judicial Continuing Legal Education Committee (Conclave), January 2017 to present.

Member, NM Courthouse Security Committee, July 2022 to present.

Water Law/Climate Change

Participant in “Los Alamos Judicial Science School”, with a focus on training judges in scientific method and evidence, Los Alamos, NM, April 4-7, 2016.

Speaker, Jurisdiction and Beneficial Use: “Water Courts v. Adjudication Courts in NM”, New Mexico Water Judges Seminar, Albuquerque, NM, November 3, 2017.

Graduate, “Judicial Leaders in Climate Science”, through Climate Judiciary Project, Environmental Law Institute and National Judicial College, curriculum completed September 14, 2022.

Speaker, “Climate Litigation: The Future is Now”, -- University of New Mexico Law School, faculty and student presentation, Albuquerque, NM, October 26, 2022.

Panelist, “Judging in a Changing Climate: Lessons from Water Courts”, webinar sponsored by Environmental Law Institute, December 6, 2022.

Attendee: “Impact of Climate Change in Puerto Rico: new frontier in judicial action”, Judicial Authority of Puerto Rico, (March 10, 2023).

Attendee: “Rising Seas and Litigation: What Judges Need to Know about Warming-Driven Sea-Level Rise”, National Judicial College virtual seminar, (April 4, 2023).

Awards, Honors and Publications:

Top graduate in Radiology Technology, Dona Ana Community College 1978
Crimson Scholar, NMSU - 1978-1981

Recipient of numerous local scholarships, NMSU - 1978 - 1981

Outstanding Senior in Economics, NMSU - 1981

Hispano Image Awards, LULAC Council 120 – 2009

Distinguished Alumni (Health and Public Svc), Dona Ana Community College – 2009

“Solving the Puzzle: The Water Court Structure and Process of Water Administration in New Mexico”: University of Denver Water Law Review, (Vol. 25, Fall 2021 issue).

Essay, “Climate Litigation: The Future is Now”: University of New Mexico, Journal of Natural Resources, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Winter 2023).

Appellate Law Experience:

Judge Arrieta has extensive appellate law experience. Judge Arrieta clerked with the New Mexico Court of Appeals in 1984-1985 for the Hon. Wm. Bivins. In addition, Judge Arrieta, while practicing as an attorney was listed as appellate counsel in the following published cases:

Piña v. Espinoza, 130 N.M. 661, 29 P.3d 1062 (App. 2001)

Matter of Barrera, 124 N.M. 220, 947 P.2d 495 (1997)

Lerma v. State Highway Dept. Of N.M., 117 N.M. 782, 877 P.2d 1085 (1994)

Galef v. Buena Vista Dairy, 117 N.M. 701, 875 P.2d 1132 (App. 1994)

Schueller v. Schueller, 117 N.M. 197, 870 P.2d 159 (App. 1994)

Church's Fried Chicken No. 1040 v. Hanson, 114 N.M. 730, 845 P.2d 824 (App. 1992)

Dimatteo v. County of Dona Ana, 109 N.M. 374, 785 P.2d 285 (App. 1989)

Garcia v. Mt. Taylor Millwork, Inc, 111 N.M. 17, 801 P.2d 87 (App. 1989)

Hernandez v. Cabrera, 107 N.M. 435, 759 P.2d 1017 (App. 1988)

Wilson v. Gillis, 105 N.M. 259, 731 P.2d 955 (App. 1987)

Albright v. Rodriguez, 51 F.3d 1531 (10th Cir. 1995)

Trial Experience:

In the last 24 years prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Arrieta worked as an attorney in the area of civil law. Judge Arrieta tried numerous civil cases before a jury with at least 50 cases before the district courts of the Third Judicial District, Fifth Judicial District, Thirteen Judicial District and Seventh Judicial District in New Mexico. Judge Arrieta has handled well over 100 cases in which the matter was either settled or dismissed before a jury verdict. In addition, Judge Arrieta has tried cases in federal court, magistrate and municipal court. In addition to trial work, Judge Arrieta has had a vast experience in worker's compensation cases (administrative) and labor department claims.

Civil Division I: The Types of Cases Heard.

Currently, Judge Arrieta presides over Division I, at the Third Judicial District Court. This is a civil division that handles civil matters which include such cases as foreclosures, debtor-creditor relations, contract disputes, commercial transactions, civil rights claims, personal injury claims, medical malpractice claims, guardianships, probate proceedings, injunctive relief, administrative appeals, governmental liability claims, insurance claims, water law, land use and zoning issues, and various other miscellaneous civil matters.

In addition to handling civil matters, Judge Arrieta is a district judge in the Third Judicial District Court, the acting Presiding Adult Drug Court Judge, the Water Law Judge for the District, and an Election Judge (2018-2021) for the District.

Division I does not handle any criminal cases or juvenile cases.