

Charting a New Course:

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)



Know your alternatives to workplace conflict.



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While conflict is a normal part of our lives, it can be an uncomfortable experience, especially in the workplace. If you find yourself in a dispute with an employee, manager, or other colleague, Alternative Dispute Resolution can help you resolve issues in a private, confidential and timely manner.



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Alternative Dispute Resolution

What is Workplace Mediation?

Workplace mediation is an informal process that uses a neutral third party to facilitate the parties' resolution of the dispute. The Department of the Navy provides certified mediators to assist employees and supervisors. The mediator has no power to make a decision or force one on any party; instead, the mediator works with all parties to reach a voluntary agreement of their own making.

Is Mediation Right for Me?

To help decide whether mediation is appropriate for your dispute, consider whether the following apply:

- The case involves continuing relationships.
- The parties want it resolved.
- The parties indicate they would like to have a say in shaping an agreement.

Remember, parties can represent themselves and/or have a representative with them. And since the mediation process is voluntary, any party can end the proceedings at any time. The disputant may then pursue the filing of a formal complaint in accordance with applicable regulations.

Who is Present During Mediation?

Participants include the Neutral, the person who brings the issue to the table (known as the "initiator"), and the person who responds to the issue (known as the "respondent"). Both participants have a right to a personal representative of their choice.

What is ADR?

Alternative Dispute Resolution is a process for resolving disputes through the mutual consent of the parties involved. ADR encourages the parties to engage in interest-based negotiations and a problem-solving process to develop a joint solution that is satisfactory and acceptable to both parties. Although there are numerous ADR techniques, workplace mediation and facilitated discussions are the most common.

Who Can Request ADR?

Current employees, applicants for employment and former employees who have workplace issues can use the ADR process to seek resolution. Requests can be made by contacting the EEO Office at 619-532-4562.

When Can I use the ADR Process?

ADR can be used to resolve workplace disputes, grievances, EEO complaints and team/group conflict.

What are Facilitated Discussions?

Facilitated discussions are typically used when a person or group is experiencing a dysfunctional conflict that negatively affects group dynamics, productivity, or employee morale. A Neutral will facilitate a healthy discussion in order to provide each side the opportunity to be clearly and fully understood. Unlike mediation, facilitated discussions do not result in a formal settlement.



Why Use Mediation or Facilitated Discussions?

Mediations and Facilitated Discussions are confidential.

The mediator/facilitator will keep all information confidential and will not willingly testify for or against either party in a court of law or an administrative process. No written record will be made of the mediation process.

Mediation and Facilitated Discussions are Quick.

A mediation settlement or memorandum of understanding takes much less time to achieve than the more timely (and costly) process of litigation.

Mediation and Facilitated Discussions are Voluntary.

You do not give up any of your rights to pursue the matter formally. While mediation is designed to be an informal resolution process, it is entirely voluntary. The parties or the mediator can end the mediation or facilitated discussion at any time.