



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0001

February 2, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: All U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Employees

FROM: Marcia L. Fudge *Marcia L. Fudge*

SUBJECT: Alternative Dispute Resolution Policy Statement

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is committed to maintaining a professional work environment by establishing and implementing policies that ensure every employee feels recognized, valued, and empowered. Our goal to create a model work environment requires that we make every effort to prevent or minimize workplace conflicts and disputes at the earliest possible stage.

The Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 provides HUD with the authority to use alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods as an option for conflict resolution. HUD ensures that ADR's core tenets of fairness, voluntariness, neutrality, and confidentiality are an integral part of the ADR process, which is used to resolve a wide range of workplace disputes in a collaborative, fair, and efficient manner. ADR will be used, to the maximum extent possible, to resolve Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints, grievances, workplace disputes, and employee or team conflicts.

Mediation is HUD's most frequently used ADR technique. Mediation allows a trained neutral mediator to help parties reach a mutually satisfactory resolution arising from a workplace dispute. The mediator does not determine who is right or wrong, but rather, helps the parties jointly explore and reconcile their differences. The mediator has no authority to impose a settlement on the parties to the dispute. As the parties control the resolution process, mediation may lead to more creative solutions, resulting in an amicable result. We also offer facilitation, coaching, conciliation, negotiation, and settlement conferences as additional dispute resolution methods. HUD's ADR process provides an opportunity to preserve and strengthen workplace relationships through the understanding and clarity that can be achieved during open and honest dialogue facilitated by a third-party neutral. Some additional benefits of ADR may include increased productivity, improved employee morale, a less contentious work environment, and mitigating prolonged legal proceedings.

HUD affirms its commitment to the use of ADR techniques throughout its programs, where appropriate and feasible, including, but not limited to, the EEO complaint process. When

the Office of Departmental Equal Employment Opportunity (ODEEO) determines that an issue, dispute, or conflict is appropriate for the ADR process and an employee wishes to engage in ADR, HUD's leadership is required to participate in the proceedings to prevent or resolve workplace conflict (unless an exception is granted) and must participate in good faith.

Maintaining a civil and productive work environment is the responsibility of all HUD employees. Addressing conflicts to preserve professional relationships is key to achieving HUD's mission to create strong, sustainable, and inclusive communities and quality affordable housing for all.

If you have a question or need assistance, please contact ODEEO at (202) 708-5921 or by email at EEO@HUD.gov. To learn more about ADR please scan the QR code below.

