



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE SECRETARY**

WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0001

MAR 17 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: All HUD Employees
FROM: Julián Castro 
SUBJECT: POLICY STATEMENT—Alternative Dispute Resolution

As an advocate of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), I pledge my commitment to maintain a healthy and safe environment within the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that fosters communication, trust, and a workplace where all employees, as well as applicants seeking employment with our organization, are treated with dignity and respect free from discrimination and harassment.

ADR is the resolution of workplace disputes through informal, voluntary, consensual techniques (settlements, negotiations, arbitration, mediation, and facilitation) without litigation or formal administrative complaint processes. ADR is designed to supplement, not limit or replace, the formal grievance and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint procedures already established in the Department.

Participation in ADR is strongly encouraged and may be initiated prior to, or after, the filing of a formal EEO complaint through the traditional administrative processes. ADR can be a valuable tool to resolve EEO complaints, grievances, and other unresolved disputes in the workplace. Managers and supervisors are required to use and participate in ADR as a tool to resolve disputes at the earliest stage possible, and prevent and minimize the escalation of disputes in an expeditious, cost-effective, and mutually acceptable manner.

Fairness of ADR is manifested by incorporating such principles as voluntariness, neutrality, confidentiality, enforceability, flexibility, training, and evaluation. HUD's ADR program is available to all employees, former employees, and applicants for employment who believe that they have suffered discrimination in the workplace because of their race, color, national origin, religion, veteran status, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), genetic information, age (40 and over), disability, or sexual orientation, or for participating in a protected activity in the EEO complaint process or having opposed a practice that is illegal under the EEO statutes.

I fully endorse the use of ADR and encourage all employees to work together to resolve workplace disputes, building a stronger HUD. I encourage all managers and supervisors to embrace my ADR philosophy, and I look forward to seeing the benefits of ADR throughout the Department.