About Us

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Office (ADRO) is located within the Office of Hearings and Appeals at DOE Headquarters in Washington D.C. ADRO serves as a resource to all DOE employees and contractors nation-wide. ADRO works to explore more efficient and cost-effective means of managing conflicts without resorting to the formalities and costs of litigation. ADRO's mission is to promote the use of conflict management and alternative dispute resolution techniques at all levels. To that end, ADRO provides an array of ADR services, including mediation, training, and other outreach activity services. When appropriate, ADRO also leverages the expertise of other resource groups for assistance.

The ADR Office

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A Few Examples of When ADR Can Help

You have problems with a coworker

You and your boss don't get along

Two of your subordinates have a dispute

Your team has issues working together effectively

For information about other employee resources, please refer to DOECares webpage at https://hcnet.doe.gov/employees/doecares

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Alternative Dispute Resolution Office

ADR

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Services

Inclusion of diverse backgrounds, perspectives and ideas in the workplace plays a critical role in helping any organization meet its mission. With differing views and opinions at a premium, conflict may, at times, be a likely byproduct. When managed properly, conflict can be a catalyst for innovation, growth and progress. The challenge is how best to harness its potential to accomplish the Agency's important mission of ensuring America's national security and energy prosperity. The ADR Office (ADRO) services are tools to manage conflict to positive ends. Those services include:

- Mediation Program
- ADR Education and Training
- Consultations/Referrals
- Facilitated Discussions

Employees may be referred to ADRO or come to ADRO directly. Please contact us for more information about our services.

Mediation Program

Located at DOE's HQ, ADRO manages DOE's mediation program, which serves DOE employees and contractors nation-wide. Most workplace conflicts are based on miscommunication that, when resolved early, offer the best opportunity for lasting resolutions.

The mediation program primarily uses in-house mediators but may use mediators from other federal agencies depending on the nature of the dispute. Mediation is available at anytime. Each party voluntarily agrees to engage in mediation but also has the right to terminate it at anytime. The parties may be accompanied by a person of their choosing, so long as neither party objects. Except for limited scenarios, discussions during a mediation are confidential.

As neutrals, mediators do not take sides but help the parties focus on their interests to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. ADRO strives to provide a timely, predictable and transparent process so that the parties have the necessary information to make informed decisions about their participation and potential outcomes.

ADR Education - Lunchtime Series

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Lunchtime programs provide guidance on "best practices" in the fields of conflict management and ADR. The programs are coordinated by ADRO and held at DOE's HQ in Washington D.C. The series is organized by the Workplace Conflict Management Section of the Interagency ADR Working Group which works to advance the use of ADR through coordination of multi-agency initiatives, promotion of best practices and programs, and dissemination of policy and guidance. These programs are open to federal employees, DOE contractors and the public in person or via webex or phone.

What's In It For You?

Conflict, which comes in different forms and degrees, is inevitable in the workplace. If mismanaged, minor irritations may escalate to be disputes diverting management's and employees' attention from carrying out the Agency's mission. Research consistently shows that managers and employees spend a significant amount of time dealing with workplace conflict.

Research also shows that it pays to address and manage conflict in a timely manner to harness the benefits it offers all, regardless of one's rank in an organization. Engaging in an ADR technique or otherwise incorporating conflict management principles into how we conduct our business will likely produce the following benefits:

- Increasing productivity and efficiency
- Preserving relationships
- Building trust

The ADR techniques and processes ADRO offers are voluntary, free, confidential and fault free and allow managers and employees control over the processes and outcomes. When appropriate, ADRO collaborates with or refers concerns, with your consent, to other employee resource organizations for resolution.

Confidentiality

Neutrality

Transparency