

Date: DEC 14 2005

From: Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (40)

Subj: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Policy

To: All National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Employees

1. The Under Secretary endorses the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) ADR program. NCA is a strong advocate for the use of alternative methods for resolving workplace disputes.
2. Policy Statement:
 - a. Mediation is VA's preferred method of ADR. It is designed to help resolve workplace disputes by using neutral parties to facilitate discussions between the individuals.
 - b. Mediation offers a win-win environment where all parties benefit. Additionally, other benefits may derive from the use of mediation. Some of these benefits are to: (1) enhance communication between parties; (2) build/rebuild workplace relationships; (3) allow parties to freely express their positions; and (4) encourage parties to explore creative solutions that resolve conflict at the earliest opportune time.
3. I ask for your strong commitment in preventing workplace disputes when feasible. Participating in solving disputes when approached with ADR as a first option will contribute to a proactive Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program within NCA.
4. This policy mandates that all managers within NCA are responsible for encouraging all their employees to use ADR. If an NCA employee identifies an issue that is appropriate for mediation and requests to engage in the process, the supervisor will participate. In the event that a NCA manager refuses to engage in mediation, the respective NCA ADR Coordinator is required to complete the attached NCA refusal form and fax it to Ms. Margareth Bennett, Diversity Management and EEO Manager at (202) 273-6697.

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5. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Bennett at (202) 273-5169.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William F. Tuerk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

William F. Tuerk

Attachment