

Managing Conflict Through Mediation

Conflict is a part of life, and that includes the workplace. Though conflict can result in positive changes, when it becomes disruptive to the work environment it may be time to get help. And that help is available right here at the Census Bureau.

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 2782, AFL-CIO, and the Census Bureau have introduced the Census Alternative Dispute Resolution Program (CADRP) for employees at headquarters and in the regions.

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is any method of resolving workplace conflicts or disputes other than the traditional EEO complaint, or grievance, processes. The method chosen by the Bureau is mediation, an interest-based, problem solving process that is voluntary and facilitated by a neutral mediator. The CADRP uses mediators from the Interagency Sharing Neutrals Program for headquarters employees and the Federal Executive Board for employees in the regions.

The CADRP offers employees a private, confidential environment where disputing parties can share feelings, clear up misunderstandings, find areas of agreement and devise mutually acceptable solutions to disputed issues. The program covers management/employee and employee/employee workplace disputes. Employees who are already in an EEO complaint, or grievance, process can request mediation

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Resolve differences... Identify common ground... Reach agreement... Discuss mutual alternatives... Make decisions...

Visit the ADR Web site at: <http://cww.census.gov/adr/or> (Census Bureau Intranet home page)
 Call the ADR Office at: 1-800-872-6096 or Fax: 301-457-2303
 ADR request forms are available in FOB 3, Wing 2, Rm. 1237 (directly across from CWET Shop) and at <http://cww.census.gov/adr>
 For headquarters bargaining unit employees in the negotiated grievance process call: AFGE, Local 2782 301-763-3175
 For employees in the EEO complaint process call: Census EEO Office 301-763-2853
 For TTY services contact: S. Yvonne Moore 301-457-2540

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when they feel it would be more beneficial in resolving their dispute.

When a request for mediation is received, a coordinator will arrange a time convenient to both parties. In contrast to EEO and grievance processes, mediations are set up within four to five days, and sessions are usually completed within one to five hours.

On Jan. 22, 2004, the CADRP was introduced with representatives from the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, Sharing Neutrals, ADR Vantage and the Department of Commerce participating in a panel discussion. More than 200 employees attended an Introduction to Mediation workshop. The Bureau has contracted with the Federal Conciliation and Mediation Services to present additional workshops for headquarters and regional office employees this fall. Watch broadcast messages for dates and times.

Information and ADR request forms are available in the CADRP office, room 1237-3, and at <http://cww.cen.gov/adr>. Employees may call 1-800-872-6096 or fax (301) 457-2303.

For headquarters bargaining unit employees currently in the negotiated grievance process, call AFGE, Local 2782 on (301) 763-3175. For employees in the EEO complaint process, call the EEO office on (301) 763-2853.

ONE BIG HAPPY[®] by Rick Detorie

