



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE MEDIATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Revision 1, 1 October 2007 (Final)

*Office of the General Counsel
Dispute Resolution Division
SAF/GCD*

Summary of Changes: Revises portions of the narrative summary to comport with changes to the Program Guidelines in Attachment 1; deletes SAF/GCD POCs from the narrative summary; revises the Program Guidelines (Attachment 1) as follows: Allows non-certified mediators to evaluate new mediators for Level I qualifications in certain circumstances (Section 2); revises and clarifies criteria for certification at each level and adds a new provision (4.e.(3)) to the waiver and substitution procedures (Section 4); clarifies requirements and procedures for submitting applications (Section 5); extends the certification period from 2 to 4 years and clarifies renewal and lapsed certification procedures (Section 7); clarifies the procedures and reduces the requirements for Level II immediate certification from 50 mediations to 30 (Section 9); revises program revisions and effective date (Section 11); and adds a sample application letter (Attachment 2).

I. Introduction

The Dispute Resolution Division of the Air Force General Counsel's Office (SAF/GCD) is responsible for Air Force Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) policy and manages the Air Force ADR Program, including general oversight of Air Force mediation standards in workplace disputes. The predominant mediation method for Air Force workplace disputes is the facilitative method. To be fully successful, the facilitative method requires a mediator with considerable skills and experience. Most mediators in Air Force workplace disputes are internal, collateral duty Air Force mediators, supplemented by contract mediators, mediators from the Investigations and Resolutions Division (IRD) of the DoD Civilian Personnel Management Service (for EEO complaints) and other federal agency mediators. Under current guidelines as reflected in AFI 51-1201, paragraphs 22 and 23, an Air Force mediator must meet the following minimum standards: (1) satisfactory completion of the Air Force Basic Mediation Course or a comparable course consisting of at least 30 hours of combined classroom and role-playing mediation instruction focusing on the facilitative method of mediation; (2) maintain acceptable proficiency through the active mediation of cases (the AFI recommends at least four per year); (3) a minimum of 8 hours of refresher training per year; (4) appointment by the installation commander or designee; and (5) adherence to the applicable Standards of Conduct. For EEO complaint mediations, the mediator must also meet EEOC requirements specified in Management Directive 110, Chapter 3, section IV.b.

The Air Force Mediator Certification Program was established on 1 January 2006 to supplement the basic mediator qualification standards in AFI 51-1201 with additional criteria to measure and recognize mediator proficiency based primarily on experience and training. As the Air Force

Dispute Resolution Specialist (AFDRS), SAF/GCD firmly believes that the health of any ADR program depends on the quality and skills of its neutrals, and that these skills must be developed and honed over time with training and experience. Moreover, effective delivery of mediation services requires matching the proper skill-level and experience of a mediator with the issues and complexities of a particular dispute. The goal of the Air Force Mediator Certification Program is to recognize mediation skills and to provide proficient dispute resolution capabilities by encouraging new and experienced mediators, and the ADR Champions who assign them to cases, to improve their skills through a combination of continuing education, training and further mediation experience.

II. Program Description

The revised Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines at Attachment 1 establish the certification requirements for Air Force mediators and the minimum standards for basic, intermediate, advanced, and master levels of proficiency (Levels I through IV of mediator certification, respectively). These levels of proficiency assure proper management of the mediator corps, while also assuring the quality of mediation services provided to the parties in Air Force workplace disputes.

Each successive level builds, in part, on the levels before it. Certification is effective for a period of four (4) years, and may be renewed or upgraded to a higher level, if program requirements are met. Mediators who were certified for two years under the previous version of the Program will be automatically extended to four years from the original date of certification. Generally speaking, a mediator certified at one level does not have to reaccomplish the requirements for that level in order to renew certification or to apply for certification at a higher level (although the greater requirements of the higher level must be met). Thus, a mediator who fulfills the 16 hours of additional education/training requirements for Level III certification does not have to establish an additional 16 hours to recertify at Level III or apply for Level IV, but if applying for Level IV, would have to meet the additional education and training requirements specifically applicable to Level IV.

SAF/GCD does not expect or desire that all Air Force mediators aspire to Level IV. The escalating rigor of the requirements from Level I to Level IV is intended to maintain a distribution of mediation skills that resembles a pyramid. We expect all Air Force mediators who are being maintained on mediator rosters to be able to meet the certification requirements of at least Level I, even if they choose not to seek certification. Most Air Force mediators on active rosters should also be qualified for Level II certification, whether they seek certification or not. ADR Champions or others who manage mediator rosters should view the Level II requirements as their guidepost for allocating mediation assignments and training opportunities, even if they do not require mediators to be Level II certified. Level III and especially Level IV are intended for those mediators who, through a combination of experience and training, have demonstrated their ability to effectively mediate any workplace dispute under any circumstances. Because of the more stringent certification requirements, the Air Force anticipates the number of mediators achieving Level III and Level IV certification will be relatively small.

III. Certification is Voluntary

The Air Force Mediator Certification Program is *voluntary*. MAJCOMs and installations are not required to adopt it for their mediators, and certification is not required for Air Force mediators to mediate Air Force workplace disputes, except in two circumstances: Air Force mediators must be at least Level II certified to: (1) Go TDY on Air Force ADR Program funds (administered by GCD) to mediate cases at other bases, and (2) Mentor or co-mediate with other mediators for the purpose of evaluating and recommending them for Level I certification. Waivers to these requirements may be granted if circumstances warrant. All other mediation duties will continue to be unrestricted regardless of certification status, subject to the minimum qualifications set forth in AFI 51-1201, paragraphs 22 and 23.

Notwithstanding the voluntary nature of certification (except as noted above), MAJCOMs and installations *may* set their own standards for mediator proficiency within their commands by requiring collateral duty mediators to meet specific certification levels as set forth in the program, and they are encouraged to do so. ADR Champions at MAJCOM and installation levels are reminded that competency of the mediator is a standard of conduct (AFI 51-1201, para 23.7), for which both the mediator *and* the ADR Champion are responsible. While certification at Level I, Basic, provides *prima facie* evidence of a minimum degree of competency for purposes of ethical standards, it may not define the required level of competency for more complicated or difficult cases. Mediation of disputes with complex or unusual issues, significant command and/or outside interest, a history of animosity between the parties, or a combination of these factors, may require mediators with qualifications signified only by the higher levels of certification. MAJCOMs or installations shall not under any circumstances require certification at any level higher than Level II (Intermediate).

The Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines include a “grandfather” provision (Section 9) that allows for expedited certification at Level I or Level II. Notwithstanding the other provisions in the Guidelines, currently active Air Force mediators who meet the specific criteria of the “grandfather” provision are immediately eligible for either Level I or Level II certification (even if they would not meet other, separate requirements specified for Levels I and II, such as three co-mediations and favorable evaluations). Certification under Section 9 is not automatic; mediators seeking expedited certification must apply and meet the criteria specified in Section 9 for the level for which they are applying. Section 9 is available only for Level I and Level II certification. Any mediator who believes he or she qualifies for Level III or IV must meet the requirements specified for those levels as set forth in Section 4 of the Guidelines.

Attachments:

1. U.S. Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines, Revision 1
2. Sample Application for Certification

Attachment 1
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MEDIATOR CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
Revision 1, 1 October 2007

1. Purpose, Scope and Definitions.

- a. To maintain and promote a voluntary certification program for Air Force mediators.
- b. To provide a graduated certification process recognizing varying levels of training and experience.
- c. To ensure a means for Air Force mediators to meet ethical standards of competency.
- d. To improve and maintain a skilled corps of Air Force mediators to provide the highest quality mediation services to disputants in Air Force workplace disputes.
- e. For purposes of this Program, an Air Force mediator is a civilian employee or uniformed member of the Air Force who mediates or is authorized to mediate Air Force workplace disputes (including EEO/MEO complaints, employee grievances and appeals, and other employee or labor-management disputes arising in Air Force facilities), whether as part of his or her full-time duties or on a collateral duty basis. Mediators from non-Air Force sources (e.g., contract mediators, IRD and other federal agency mediators) are not Air Force mediators and are not covered by this certification program.
- f. For purposes of this Program, and in particular the “Requirements for Certification” in Section 4 below, the term “mediation” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in AFI 51-1201, Attachment 1.

2. Implementation and Compliance.

- a. Certification is voluntary. SAF/GCD will not require any Air Force mediator to apply for certification or to be certified at any level in order to be eligible for duties as a mediator in an Air Force workplace dispute, except as follows:
 - (1) Mediators who are sent TDY to mediate disputes at other installations using Air Force ADR Program funds (administered through GCD) shall be at least Level II certified. GCD may waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis when sufficient extenuating circumstances are shown.
 - (2) Mediators who mentor or co-mediate with another mediator for the purpose of evaluating and recommending that mediator for Level I certification under Section 4.a (4) below shall be at least Level II certified. GCD may waive this requirement when the evaluating/mentoring mediator is clearly qualified for certification at Level II or

- higher but is not certified solely for reasons unrelated to skill or competence, e.g., the mediator is an IRD, other federal agency, or contract mediator and therefore not eligible for certification under this Program.
- b. Notwithstanding Section 2.a. above, a MAJCOM may in its discretion require Level I or Level II certification for Air Force mediators assigned to its constituent installations who are appointed to mediate workplace disputes at those installations.
 - c. Notwithstanding Section 2.a above, an Air Force installation may in its discretion, if not prohibited by the parent MAJCOM, require Level I or Level II certification for any Air Force mediator assigned to that installation and appointed to mediate workplace disputes.

3. Certifying Authority.

- a. The Deputy General Counsel for Dispute Resolution (SAF/GCD) is the Air Force Dispute Resolution Specialist, responsible for Air Force ADR policy and compliance. The Associate General Counsel in charge of the ADR program for workplace disputes in SAF/GCD is the certifying authority for certification levels I through III.
- b. The Deputy General Counsel for Dispute Resolution must personally approve, in writing, all Level IV certifications, and may certify levels I through III.

4. Requirements for Certification.

- a. Level I (One) Certification (Basic). To qualify for Level I certification, an applicant must:
 - (1) Satisfactorily complete the Air Force Basic Mediation Course, or a comparable course of instruction consisting of a minimum 30 hours in the classroom that teaches the facilitative model of mediation.¹ Completion of a course other than the Air Force Basic Mediation Course may require proof of completion and proof of curriculum to ensure compatibility.

¹ **Basic Mediation Course Requirements:**

- Introduction to the Mediation Process: Facilitative Model
- Interest-Based Negotiation: Theory and Practicum
- Introduction to case Intake and Logistics (Convening)
- Understanding Active Listening and Application
- Effective Agreement Writing: Components and Practicum
- Understanding Mediator Ethics: Standards, and Practicum
- Understanding and Adhering to Confidentiality Requirements: Theory, Analysis and Practicum
- Introduction to Case Screening: Criteria and Practicum
- Mediation Role Plays (minimum of three, with at least one as the mediator)

- (2) Demonstrate mediator characteristics and standards of conduct (e.g., judgment, temperament, communication and listening abilities, comprehension, impartiality, demeanor, etc.) as attested to by the installation ADR Champion.²
- (3) Be appointed by the Installation Commander or Designee as a collateral duty mediator, IAW AFI 51-1201, ¶ 22.3, or otherwise be available for assignment by the ADR Champion to mediate workplace disputes.
- (4) Participate in a minimum three (3) co-mediations or mediation mentoring sessions in actual Air Force workplace disputes, each under the guidance of an experienced mediator, who provides feedback, a written evaluation, and recommendation for certification. The evaluating mediator must either be certified under these Guidelines at Level II or higher, or must be waived by GCD from the certification requirement for the reasons stated in Section 2.a(2) above.
- (5) Have no pending complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
- (6) Be recommended for Level I certification by the installation ADR Champion, accompanied by the written evaluations. If the recommendation disagrees with the evaluations, the ADR Champion will address the basis for disagreement in the recommendation.

b. Level II (Two) Certification (Intermediate). To qualify for Level II certification, an applicant must have a current Level I certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level I. In addition, the applicant must:

- (1) Have a minimum of 20 career solo mediations, at least 15 of which occurred in Air Force workplace disputes, and at least 8 of which occurred in the two years preceding the application for certification.
- (2) Have a minimum 8 hours of continuing development or refresher in interest-based negotiation or facilitation skills per year for the preceding two years (minimum 16 hours total). The annual 8 hours of refresher training specified in AFI 51-1201, ¶ 22.2 meets this requirement.
- (3) Have a minimum 8 hours of Diversity Training, including cultural and gender diversity. This training requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training requirement, but may be met through annual refresher training so long as the minimum hourly requirements for each are satisfied.
- (4) Be qualified to mediate EEO cases IAW EEOC MD-110, Chapter 3, § IV.b.³
- (5) Have a satisfactory record of evaluations from mediation participants.

² The term “ADR Champion” is defined in AFI 51-1201, Attachment 1, as “[a]n individual appointed...to promote the use of ADR processes for resolving workplace disputes, to facilitate the development and implementation of the organization’s workplace disputes ADR plan, and to provide oversight of the organization’s workplace disputes ADR program.” IAW AFI 51-1201, ¶ 12, the installation ADR Champion is responsible for managing the installation’s ADR program. Each installation should have only one ADR Champion for workplace disputes.

³ EEO Qualifications can be obtained by:

- A minimum 16 hours training on federal EEO complaint procedures, theories of discrimination and remedies, OR
- Actual experience with the federal EEO process as an EEO Counselor, EEO Manager, IRD investigator, or labor attorney.

- (6) Be recommended for Level II certification by the installation or MAJCOM ADR Champion.
- c. Level III (Three) Certification (Advanced). To qualify for Level III certification, an applicant must have a current Level II certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level II. In addition, the applicant must:
- (1) Have a minimum 75 career mediations in which the applicant was the sole or, in the case of co-mediations, the principal or mentoring mediator, with a demonstrated resolution (settlement) rate of 70% or better. At least half of the mediations claimed for this requirement must have been in Air Force workplace disputes. To meet this requirement, the applicant may include non-mediation facilitative ADR proceedings in which he or she served as a third party neutral, so long as such proceedings are specifically described and account for no more than one-fourth (25%) of the total career mediations claimed.
 - (2) Have a minimum 20 mediations or other qualifying dispute resolution proceedings during the preceding three years.
 - (3) Have a minimum 16 hours of continuing education in conflict resolution knowledge, skills, and abilities (Dispute Resolution or Collaborative Decision Making) during each of the preceding three years. This requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training and other training requirements of Levels I and II. For purposes of this requirement, continuing education and training may consist of classroom instruction, distance learning, teleconferences, computer-based training, formal mentoring sessions, “brown bag” lunches, in-service sessions, and practical skills training, or any combination thereof, provided internally by the Air Force or offered through or sponsored by entities such as local court systems, bar associations, civic organizations, academic institutions, technical and trade schools, fraternal associations, sharing neutrals programs, or other entities, public or private, that issue a certificate of completion or otherwise document subject matter and duration of training.
 - (4) Successfully complete the Air Force Advanced Mediation Course with a grade of B or higher.
 - (5) Have a minimum of 10 career mediations in which the parties were represented by individuals (attorneys or non-attorneys) and/or organizations.
 - (6) Have no pending or substantiated previous complaints of ethical or professional standards violations.
 - (7) Be recommended for Level III by the installation ADR Champion, with concurrence by the MAJCOM ADR Champion.
- d. Level IV (Four) Certification (Master). To qualify for Level IV certification, an applicant must have a current Level III certification, or show completion of or compliance with the basic requirements of Level III. In addition, the applicant must:
- (1) Have a minimum 150 career mediations, in which the applicant was the sole or, in the case of co-mediations, the principal or mentoring mediator, with a demonstrated resolution (settlement) rate of 75% or better. At least half of the mediations claimed

- for this requirement must have been in Air Force workplace disputes. To meet this requirement, the applicant may include non-mediation facilitative ADR proceedings in which he or she served as a third party neutral, so long as such proceedings are specifically described and account for no more than one-fourth (25%) of the total career mediations claimed.
- (2) Have a minimum 30 mediations or other qualifying dispute resolution proceedings during the preceding three years.
 - (3) Successfully complete an Advanced Negotiation or Conflict Resolution course (minimum 24 hours). This requirement is in addition to the 8-hour annual refresher training and other training requirements of Levels I through III. This requirement may be satisfied through classroom or practical training programs (including distance learning and computer-based training) offered by public or private academic or technical training institutions for which a certificate of completion, diploma, or other documented evidence of satisfactory completion is given.
 - (4) Demonstrate ability to competently mediate complex and/or high visibility disputes.
 - (5) Be recommended for Level IV by the installation and MAJCOM ADR Champions.
 - (6) Be personally approved for Level IV certification in writing by the Deputy General Counsel for Dispute Resolution (SAF/GCD).

e. Waiver and Substitution of Requirements.

- (1) SAF/GCD may waive a particular requirement for certification at any level if, in its judgment, the applicant can otherwise demonstrate compliance with the standards of competency for that level. For example, SAF/GCD may waive all or part of the co-mediation/mentoring requirement for Level I certification if the applicant produces a written recommendation signed by a Level III or Level IV certified mediator and based on actual observation of the applicant's unassisted performance as a mediator in an actual mediation. Waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will not be routinely granted.
- (2) SAF/GCD may, in its discretion, substitute other qualifying training or experience for one or more requirements in any level. For example, if an applicant for Level III or IV certification has completed a graduate-level program in conflict or dispute resolution at an accredited college or university, SAF/GCD will substitute that training for the requisite Advanced Mediation training or courses in Advanced Negotiation or Conflict Resolution. SAF/GCD will also substitute mediation experience gained in other federal agency or private sector workplace disputes if, in its judgment, such experience provides the necessary grounding to provide the degree of competency required for a particular level of certification.
- (3) An application for certification seeking waiver or substitution of a requirement should identify the particular matter for which waiver or substitution is requested and provide justification therefor. If GCD rejects a waiver or substitution request and the rejection results in disapproval of the application or certification at a lower level than that requested, it will state the reason for the rejection IAW Section 5.f.

5. Application for and Issuance of Certification.

- a. A mediator may apply for certification at any level whose requirements he or she believes are met.
- b. The application need not be in any particular format, but must be in writing and must at a minimum contain the following (see Attachment 2 for a sample):
 - (1) The level of certification requested;
 - (2) The applicant's qualifications relevant to the specific criteria for the level requested (for Level I and Level II applications, specify whether certification is sought under Section 4 or Section 9 criteria);
 - (3) Supporting documentary evidence as specified in Section 6;
 - (4) The applicant's contact information;
 - (5) The date of the application; and
 - (6) The applicant's signature.
- c. All applications for certification must be submitted through the applicant's servicing ADR Champion, who will ensure the application is complete and includes all required documentary support. Installation ADR Champions who submit their own applications for certification will skip this step and the next step (Section 5.d.), and will instead submit their applications directly to the parent MAJCOM ADR Champion for review and recommendation as specified in Section 5.e. below. MAJCOM and Direct Reporting Unit (DRU) ADR Champions (i.e., Air Force District of Washington, U.S. Air Force Academy, or Air Intelligence Agency) who apply for certification should submit their applications directly to SAF/GCD as specified in Section 5.e below.
- d. The installation ADR Champion will attach his or her recommendation for or against certification. A recommendation against certification, or a recommendation that varies from the recommendations of co-mediators or mediation mentors in a Level I certification application, must give reasons for the recommendation. All recommendations must be signed and dated by the ADR Champion, and should include the ADR Champion's duty telephone number (DSN and commercial), email address, and office mailing address.
- e. Once endorsed by the installation ADR Champion, applications for Level I and II certifications should be sent directly to SAF/GCD. Applications for Level III and IV certifications, and all applications submitted by installation ADR Champions regardless of level, must go to the MAJCOM ADR Champion for endorsement before being forwarded to SAF/GCD. MAJCOM and DRU ADR Champions submit their applications directly to GCD. Send hard copy applications to: SAF/GCD, 1777 N. Kent Street, Suite 11500, Arlington VA 22209. Allow at least 10 duty days for regular mail, two duty days for FedEx or other overnight service deliveries. Scanned applications and supporting documents may be submitted electronically to GCD if they are legible. Email scanned

applications to gcdadr@pentagon.af.mil or to SAFGCD.workflow@pentagon.af.mil. FAX submissions are not acceptable and will not be processed.

- f. SAF/GCD will review each application and, if the requirements are met, will issue to the mediator a signed and dated certificate indicating the appropriate level of certification. If an application for certification fails to meet the requirements for the level applied for, but does meet the requirements for certification at a lower level, SAF/GCD will issue a certification at the lower level, giving its reasons for the lower-level certification. If the applicant is already certified at the lower level, the certification will be treated as a recertification at that level IAW Section 7. The servicing ADR Champion will also be notified of the certification or recertification. If SAF/GCD denies an application for certification and does not issue a certification or recertification at a lower level, it will notify the applicant and the ADR Champion of the denial in writing, specifying the reason(s) for the denial.
- g. SAF/GCD will maintain a roster of all certified Air Force mediators, indicating the level of certification, date of issue and expiration date.

6. Documentation Requirements.

- a. Documentary support for any level of certification must be sufficient to demonstrate its authenticity and relevance to the requirement it supports.
- b. Acceptable documentation includes:
 - (1) Photocopies of evaluations signed and dated by the co-mediator or mediation mentor for Level I certifications.
 - (2) Photocopies of training certificates, diplomas, DD Forms 1556, transcripts, or other documents showing satisfactory completion of training or education necessary to support the level of certification applied for (e.g., basic and advanced mediation training, EEO training, conflict resolution training, diversity training, graduate programs in conflict resolution). For non-Air Force basic mediation training, documentation should include a photocopy of the course syllabus or a brochure showing the subjects and activities covered.
 - (3) Originals of all recommendations for certification, signed and dated by the recommending official (e.g., installation or MAJCOM ADR Champion).
 - (4) Signed originals of other recommendations for certification the applicant wants GCD to consider. For example, letters from other mediators or instructors in training programs attended by the applicant.
 - (5) For number of mediations performed and settlement rate (if applicable), either a record kept in the normal course of business showing total career mediations performed and mediations performed within the requisite time period and their outcomes, OR, in the absence of such a record, an original written statement, signed

- by the applicant and attested by the ADR Champion, providing this information in a manner sufficient to reasonably establish its accuracy and completeness.⁴
- (6) A photocopy of the letter of appointment as a mediator signed by the applicant's installation commander or designee.
 - (7) A statement, signed by the servicing ADR Champion, indicating that the applicant has no pending complaints (or previous substantiated complaints, if required by the level of certification) for violation of ethics requirements or standards of conduct. This statement may be included in the ADR Champion's recommendation for certification (6.b.(3) above).
 - (8) Any other document of apparent authenticity showing that the applicant meets one or more requirements of the level for which he or she is applying.
- c. In cases where the authenticity or relevance of a document cannot be determined, SAF/GCD may contact the applicant and/or the ADR Champion for additional information. Unless there is specific evidence that a document is not authentic or was submitted in bad faith, SAF/GCD will give the applicant the benefit of the doubt and treat the document as authentic.
 - d. Any absence of documentation to support a particular requirement for certification should be explained in the application so GCD can determine whether to credit the applicant with satisfying the requirement notwithstanding the absence of documentation or other evidence.

7. Duration of Certification and Recertification.

- a. Certification for all levels is valid for a period of four (4) years from the date it is issued by SAF/GCD. Upon effective date of this Revision, two-year certifications issued under previous Program Guidelines are automatically extended an additional two years from the original date of certification without further action on the part of the certificate holder.
- b. A certification may be renewed for an additional period of four (4) years if the renewal request is submitted to SAF/GCD within 60 days after the expiration date of the prior certification period.
 - (1) To the extent feasible, GCD will notify certified mediators and their servicing ADR Champions of expiration 60 days before the expiration date. To facilitate notification, certified mediators should advise GCD of any changes in duty address or other contact information.
 - (2) To be recertified at the current level, the mediator need not reestablish the certification criteria for the level being renewed, but must furnish evidence that during the previous four-year certification period he or she performed at least ten (10) mediations or other qualifying proceedings, received required mediation refresher training, and had no violations of ethical or professional standards of conduct.

⁴ The installation's annual ADR report to GCD should show the number of career mediations and mediations during the applicable time period for mediators listed in the report, but it does not show career settlement rates.

- c. Certification will be renewed at the current level unless the applicant furnishes evidence demonstrating he or she meets certification standards at a higher level, in which case SAF/GCD will treat the renewal as an application for certification at the higher level and issue the certification accordingly.
- d. A certified mediator may apply for upgrade certification to a higher level at any time during an active period of certification. If GCD approves the higher level, the new certification displaces the previous certification and a new four-year certification period begins as of the date of certification at the higher level.
- e. A certification lapses after 60 days beyond its expiration date. A renewal request submitted after the 60-day lapse period has run will be treated as a new application, even if it is for the same level. GCD can make an exception and accept the late request as a renewal, for excusable delay or other good cause.

8. Decertification.

- a. SAF/GCD may decertify any certified mediator for a substantiated violation of ethical or professional standards. The servicing ADR Champion will be notified of any decertification action involving a mediator assigned to a location for which the ADR Champion is responsible.
- b. An installation ADR Champion can decertify individual mediators for violation of ethical or professional standards, after notifying the MAJCOM ADR Champion and SAF/GCD.
- c. Decertification does not *per se* disqualify a mediator from further service as an Air Force mediator, but may be a basis for initiation of action under AFI 51-1201, paragraph 40.1 (“Complaints About Mediation Services”).
- d. A mediator decertified by GCD under Section 8.a may request reconsideration of the decertification by submitting a written request for reconsideration within ten (10) calendar days of receiving notice of the decertification. The request should state the grounds for reconsideration, and must be forwarded through the servicing ADR Champion to SAF/GCD. Within 20 calendar days of receiving the request, the Deputy General Counsel for Dispute Resolution will render a decision, which shall be final.

9. Eligibility for Immediate Level I or II Certification.

- a. Notwithstanding the “Requirements for Certification” in Section 4 above, an Air Force mediator is eligible to apply for immediate certification at Level I or II if he or she meets the requirements set forth in “b” or “c” below, as appropriate.
- b. A mediator is eligible for immediate Level I certification if he or she:

- (1) Is currently on an active mediator roster and available for assignment for mediation duties or can demonstrate current mediation activity;
- (2) Has performed a minimum ten (10) mediations of which at least eight (8) were solo, and at least four (4) of which occurred in the past year;
- (3) Has no pending complaints for violation of ethics or professional standards; and
- (4) Has completed basic mediation training (Air Force Basic Mediation Course or comparable), and at least eight (8) hours refresher or comparable training within the past year.

c. A mediator is eligible for immediate Level II certification if he or she:

- (1) Meets the criteria specified in subsections 9.b (1), (3) and (4) above;
- (2) Has performed a minimum 30 mediations or co-mediations or combination thereof, at least 20 of which were solo and at least six (6) of which occurred in the past year; and
- (3) Is qualified to mediate EEO cases IAW EEOC Management Directive 110, Chapter 3, § IV.b.

d. In evaluating applications for immediate certification under this Section, SAF/GCD may substitute other experience or qualifications for the listed requirements above in accordance with Section 4(e).

e. Immediate certification under this Section is not automatic; a mediator must apply for certification, citing the relevant provision of Section 9 as the basis.

10. Records Management.

- a. Personal information submitted or generated in connection with an application for certification will be stored on paper and/or electronic media. Proper measures to limit access (e.g., locking file cabinets, electronic passwords) will be maintained.
- b. Records are subject to the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a. The system of records notice was published in Vol. 70, No. 226 of the *Federal Register*, page 71096, on 25 November 2005, with an effective date of 27 December 2005. Use the following blanket PAS:

Authority: Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996, 5 U.S.C. 573, Neutrals; 10 U.S.C. 8019, General Counsel of the Air Force.

Purpose: To evaluate Air Force mediators for certification at certain skill levels commensurate with knowledge, training and experience.

Routine Uses: This information will be used to determine whether to certify Air Force mediators who apply for certification, and at what level of proficiency. In addition to the disclosures generally permitted under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b), these records may be disclosed outside DoD as a routine use pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(3) under the DoD "Blanket Routine Uses" published at the beginning of the Air Force's compilation of record system notices.

Disclosure is voluntary. However, failure to provide the information requested may result in denial of certification.

- c. Records will be subject to the records disposition requirements applicable to Air Force Mediator Utilization Management Records, F051 SAFGC A. Applications for certification and all associated documents will be retained in SAF/GCD during the active period of certification and for one (1) year after certification lapses, after which they will be destroyed. Rejected applications for certification will be retained in SAF/GCD for a period of one (1) year and then destroyed.

11. Program Revisions and Effective Dates.

- a. SAF/GCD may make revisions to the Mediator Certification Program from time to time, subject to MAJCOM and base-level ADR Champion review and comment. Revisions are effective upon publication to the field through command channels and/or by posting for general access on the Air Force ADR Program website, www.adr.af.mil.
- b. This Revision (Revision 1) shall take effect on 1 October 2007. Previous versions of the Mediator Certification Program are superseded as of that date.

Attachment 2
SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

MEMORANDUM FOR _____ *[Base ADR Champion]*
[MAJCOM ADR Champion, if applicable]
SAF/GCD

FROM: Applicant's Name

SUBJECT: Application for Certification as a Level _____ Mediator

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Air Force Mediator Certification Program Guidelines (Revision 1), I hereby apply for Level (I) (II) (III) (IV) *[specify the level for which you are applying]* certification as an Air Force mediator.
2. I am/am not applying for Immediate Certification under Section 9 of the Guidelines. *[Immediate certification is available only for Level I or Level II. If you are applying for Level III or IV, disregard this paragraph. If you are applying for immediate Level I or II certification, GCD will evaluate your application under the Section 9 criteria only.]*
3. In support of this application, I am submitting the following mediation and other relevant training and experience: *[List the courses and other training programs completed, number of mediations or other qualifying proceedings conducted and success rate (if applicable), and other activities you want GCD to consider in evaluating your application. Be sure to attach whatever documentary evidence you have to support the activities claimed. List all relevant training and experience, not limited to the Air Force, if otherwise relevant.]*
4. *[If you want GCD to waive a requirement for certification, or to substitute alternative training or experience for a requirement pursuant to Section 4.e. of the Guidelines, state that here with your justification for doing so.]*
5. My contact information is: *[list your duty station mailing address, DSN and commercial telephone numbers (voice and FAX) and email address].*
6. *[Provide any other information you would like GCD to consider in evaluating your application.]*

DATE: _____

(Signature)
PRINTED NAME

Attachments:
[List relevant documents and attach to application]

1st Ind, Application for Certification, _____ (Name) _____

(Date)

FROM: Base ADR Champion *[or MAJCOM ADR Champion if applicant is a base ADR Champion]*

TO: SAF/GCD *[or MAJCOM ADR Champion, if applicable]*

1. I have reviewed _____'s application for Level ____ certification pursuant to the Air Force Mediator Certification Program. I recommend that it be *[approved/ disapproved/ approved at a lower level (specify level)]*.
2. My reasons for this recommendation follow *[specify reasons for recommendation, especially if the recommendation is to disapprove the application or to approve it at a level lower than that applied for]*:
3. If you have any questions, please contact me at (DSN and commercial telephone number and email address).

//Signed//
ADR Champion

2nd Ind, Application for Certification, _____ (Name) _____

(Date)

FROM: MAJCOM ADR Champion *[if applicable]*

TO: SAF/GCD

1. I have reviewed the application for certification and the installation ADR Champion's recommendation. I concur/nonconcur with the recommendation *[you may state the reason(s) for a concurrence; you must state the reason(s) for nonconcurrence]*.
2. Accordingly, recommend the application be *[approved/disapproved/approved at a lower level (specify level)]*.
3. If you have any questions, please contact me at (DSN and commercial telephone number and email address).

//Signed//
MAJCOM ADR Champion