



DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY
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MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION LIST

SUBJECT: Alternative Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management Policy

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) is firmly committed to using methods other than litigation for addressing workplace conflict and resolving Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and other workplace disputes in all its operations. Used appropriately, mediation can provide faster, less expensive, and more productive results in resolving concerns about workplace discrimination through the EEO program for civilians. Likewise, seeking early conflict management (CM) assistance can bring clarity to miscommunication, improve interpersonal interactions, and reduce workplace conflict, returning employees and managers to more satisfying and productive engagement on the workplace.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulation at 29 C.F.R. 1614.102 (b) (2) requires agencies to establish or make available an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program. The ADR program must be available during both the pre-complaint and formal complaint processes and must ensure the participation of a management official with settlement authority. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 5145.05, "Alternate Dispute Resolution Management," May 27, 2016, supports such programs and sets the expectation that all DoD components will additionally incorporate CM skill building as an integral part of normal business practices, so that workplace conflict can be resolved before disputes get entrenched.

The most frequently used type of ADR within DHA, particularly for EEO/CM disputes, is mediation, conducted by a qualified mediator or co-mediators.

Responsibility and authority for the DHA ADR/CM program rests with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management (EODM) office. To enhance the effectiveness of ADR in DHA, management officials are required to take part in the process if mediation is requested by the employee, unless extenuating circumstances exist.

DHA personnel are encouraged to identify and address workplace conflict regardless of whether it has led to an EEO/CM dispute, and to take steps to resolve that conflict in its early stages by identifying underlying issues and addressing them in a manner that supports a return of personnel to their focus on the DHA mission. DHA personnel are encouraged to seek assistance with resolution of such conflict through the DHA ADR/CM program. All managers, supervisors, and employees have the responsibility under this policy to work toward the resolution of workplace disputes to enhance productivity and promote harmonious work relationships.

If you require more information regarding ADR/CM, please contact the EODM office at e-mail: DHA.EODM@mail.mil.

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TELITA CROSLAND
LTG, USA
Director

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