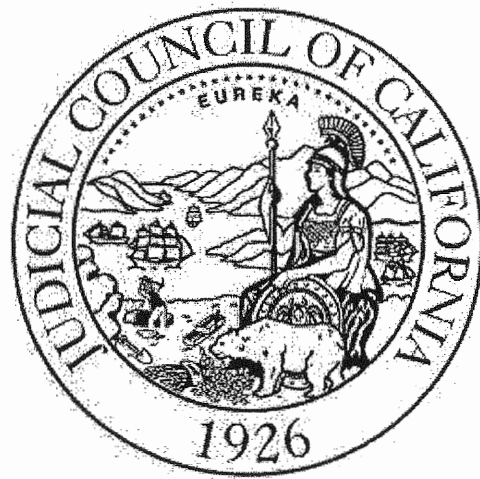


**ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION
IN CIVIL CASES**





SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) INFORMATION

NOTICE: All plaintiffs/cross-complainants in a general civil case are required to serve a copy of the following three forms on each defendant/cross-defendant, together with the complaint/cross-complaint:

- (1) this Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Information form (SDSC form #CIV-730),
- (2) the Stipulation to Use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) form (SDSC form #CIV-359), and
- (3) the Notice of Case Assignment form (SDSC form #CIV-721).

Most civil disputes are resolved without filing a lawsuit, and most civil lawsuits are resolved without a trial. The courts, community organizations, and private providers offer a variety of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes to help people resolve disputes without a trial. The San Diego Superior Court expects that litigants will utilize some form of ADR as a mechanism for case settlement before trial, and it may be beneficial to do this early in the case.

Below is some information about the potential advantages and disadvantages of ADR, the most common types of ADR, and how to find a local ADR program or neutral. A form for agreeing to use ADR is attached (SDSC form #CIV-359).

Potential Advantages and Disadvantages of ADR

ADR may have a variety of advantages or disadvantages over a trial, depending on the type of ADR process used and the particular case:

Potential Advantages

- Saves time
- Saves money
- Gives parties more control over the dispute resolution process and outcome
- Preserves or improves relationships

Potential Disadvantages

- May take more time and money if ADR does not resolve the dispute
- Procedures to learn about the other side's case (discovery), jury trial, appeal, and other court protections may be limited or unavailable

Most Common Types of ADR

You can read more information about these ADR processes and watch videos that demonstrate them on the court's ADR webpage at <http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov/adr>.

Mediation: A neutral person called a "mediator" helps the parties communicate in an effective and constructive manner so they can try to settle their dispute. The mediator does not decide the outcome, but helps the parties to do so. Mediation is usually confidential, and may be particularly useful when parties want or need to have an ongoing relationship, such as in disputes between family members, neighbors, co-workers, or business partners, or when parties want to discuss non-legal concerns or creative resolutions that could not be ordered at a trial.

Settlement Conference: A judge or another neutral person called a "settlement officer" helps the parties to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their case and to discuss settlement. The judge or settlement officer does not make a decision in the case but helps the parties to negotiate a settlement. Settlement conferences may be particularly helpful when the parties have very different ideas about the likely outcome of a trial and would like an experienced neutral to help guide them toward a resolution.

Arbitration: A neutral person called an "arbitrator" considers arguments and evidence presented by each side and then decides the outcome of the dispute. Arbitration is less formal than a trial, and the rules of evidence are usually relaxed. If the parties agree to *binding arbitration*, they waive their right to a trial and agree to accept the arbitrator's decision as final. With *nonbinding arbitration*, any party may reject the arbitrator's decision and request a trial. Arbitration may be appropriate when the parties want another person to decide the outcome of their dispute but would like to avoid the formality, time, and expense of a trial.

Other ADR Processes: There are several other types of ADR which are not offered through the court but which may be obtained privately, including neutral evaluation, conciliation, fact finding, mini-trials, and summary jury trials. Sometimes parties will try a combination of ADR processes. The important thing is to try to find the type or types of ADR that are most likely to resolve your dispute. Be sure to learn about the rules of any ADR program and the qualifications of any neutral you are considering, and about their fees.

Local ADR Programs for Civil Cases

Mediation: The San Diego Superior Court maintains a Civil Mediation Panel of approved mediators who have met certain minimum qualifications and have agreed to charge \$150 per hour for each of the first two (2) hours of mediation and their regular hourly rate thereafter in court-referred mediations.

On-line mediator search and selection: Go to the court's ADR webpage at www.sdcourt.ca.gov/adr and click on the "Mediator Search" to review individual mediator profiles containing detailed information about each mediator including their dispute resolution training, relevant experience, ADR specialty, education and employment history, mediation style, and fees and to submit an on-line Mediator Selection Form (SDSC form #CIV-005). The Civil Mediation Panel List, the Available Mediator List, individual Mediator Profiles, and Mediator Selection Form (CIV-005) can also be printed from the court's ADR webpage and are available at the Mediation Program Office or Civil Business Office at each court location.

Settlement Conference: The judge may order your case to a mandatory settlement conference, or voluntary settlement conferences may be requested from the court if the parties certify that: (1) settlement negotiations between the parties have been pursued, demands and offers have been tendered in good faith, and resolution has failed; (2) a judicially supervised settlement conference presents a substantial opportunity for settlement; and (3) the case has developed to a point where all parties are legally and factually prepared to present the issues for settlement consideration and further discovery for settlement purposes is not required. Refer to SDSC Local Rule [2.2.1](#) for more information. To schedule a settlement conference, contact the department to which your case is assigned.

Arbitration: The San Diego Superior Court maintains a panel of approved judicial arbitrators who have practiced law for a minimum of five years and who have a certain amount of trial and/or arbitration experience. Refer to SDSC Local Rules [Division II, Chapter III](#) and Code Civ. Proc. [§ 1141.10 et seq](#) or contact the Arbitration Program Office at (619) 450-7300 for more information.

More information about court-connected ADR: Visit the court's ADR webpage at www.sdcourt.ca.gov/adr or contact the court's Mediation/Arbitration Office at (619) 450-7300.

Dispute Resolution Programs Act (DRPA) funded ADR Programs: The following community dispute resolution programs are funded under DRPA (Bus. and Prof. Code §§ 465 et seq.):

- In Central, East, and South San Diego County, contact the National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC) at www.ncrconline.com or (619) 238-2400.
- In North San Diego County, contact North County Lifeline, Inc. at www.nclifeline.org or (760) 726-4900.


Private ADR: To find a private ADR program or neutral, search the Internet, your local telephone or business directory, or legal newspaper for dispute resolution, mediation, settlement, or arbitration services.

Legal Representation and Advice

To participate effectively in ADR, it is generally important to understand your legal rights and responsibilities and the likely outcomes if you went to trial. ADR neutrals are not allowed to represent or to give legal advice to the participants in the ADR process. If you do not already have an attorney, the California State Bar or your local County Bar Association can assist you in finding an attorney. Information about obtaining free and low cost legal assistance is also available on the California courts website at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/lowcost.

NAME OF COURT: _____

ADR Information Form

This form should be filled out and returned,
within 10 days of the resolution of the dispute, to: 

1. Case name: _____ No. _____
2. Type of civil case: PI/PD-Auto PI/PD-Other Contract Other (specify): _____
3. Date complaint filed _____ Date case resolved _____
4. Date of ADR conference _____ 5. Number of parties _____
6. Amount in controversy \$0-\$25,000 \$25,000-\$50,000 \$50,000-\$100,000 over \$100,000 (specify): _____
7. Plaintiff's Attorney Cross Complainant's Attorney 8. Defendant's Attorney Cross Defendant's Attorney

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

 () _____
 TELEPHONE NUMBER

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

 () _____
 TELEPHONE NUMBER

9. Please indicate your relationship to the case:
- Plaintiff Plaintiff's attorney Defendant Defendant's attorney
- 3rd party defendant 3rd party defendant's attorney Other (specify): _____
10. Dispute resolution process:
- Mediation Arbitration Neutral case evaluation Other (specify): _____
11. How was case resolved?
- a. As a direct result of the ADR process. c. Resolution was unrelated to ADR process.
- b. As an indirect result of the ADR process.
12. Check the closest dollar amount that you estimate you saved (attorneys fees, expert witness fees, and other costs) by using this dispute resolution process compared to resolving this case through litigation, whether by settlement or trial.
- \$0 \$250 \$500 \$750 \$1,000 more than \$1,000 (specify): \$ _____
13. If the dispute resolution process caused a net increase in your costs in this case, check the closest dollar amount of the *additional* cost:
- \$0 \$250 \$500 \$750 \$1,000 more than \$1,000 (specify): \$ _____
14. Check the closest number of court days that you estimate the court saved (motions, hearings, conferences, trial, etc.) as a result of this case being referred to this dispute resolution process:
- 0 1 day more than 1 day (specify): _____
15. If the dispute resolution process caused a net increase in court time for this case, check the closest number of *additional* court days:
- 0 1 day more than 1 day (specify): _____
16. Would you be willing to consider using this dispute resolution process again? Yes No

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO <input type="checkbox"/> CENTRAL DIVISION, HALL OF JUSTICE, 330 W. BROADWAY, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101 <input type="checkbox"/> EAST COUNTY DIVISION, 250 E. MAIN ST., EL CAJON, CA 92020 <input type="checkbox"/> EAST COUNTY DIVISION, RAMONA, 1428 MONTECITO RD., RAMONA, CA 92065 <input type="checkbox"/> NORTH COUNTY DIVISION, 325 S. MELROSE DR., VISTA, CA 92081 <input type="checkbox"/> SOUTH COUNTY DIVISION, 500 3RD AVE., CHULA VISTA, CA 91910	<i>FOR COURT USE ONLY</i>
PLAINTIFF(S)	ASSIGNED JUDGE
DEFENDANT(S)	DEPT
STIPULATION TO USE ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)	SUPERIOR COURT CASE NUMBER

The parties and their attorneys stipulate that the matter is at issue and the claims in this action shall be submitted to the following alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process. Selection of any of these options will not delay any case management timelines.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mediation (court-connected) | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binding private arbitration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mediation (private) | <input type="checkbox"/> Binding private arbitration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary settlement conference (private) | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binding judicial arbitration (discovery until 15 days before trial) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral evaluation (private) | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binding judicial arbitration (discovery until 30 days before trial) |
- Other (specify e.g., private mini-trial, private judge, etc.): _____

It is also stipulated that the following shall serve as arbitrator, mediator or other neutral: (Name) _____

Alternate neutral (for court Civil Mediation Program and arbitration only): _____

Date: _____	Date: _____
_____ Name of Plaintiff	_____ Name of Defendant
_____ Signature	_____ Signature
_____ Name of Plaintiff's Attorney	_____ Name of Defendant's Attorney
_____ Signature	_____ Signature

If there are more parties and/or attorneys, please attach additional completed and fully executed sheets.

It is the duty of the parties to notify the court of any settlement pursuant to Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1385. Upon notification of the settlement, the court will place this matter on a 45-day dismissal calendar.

No new parties may be added without leave of court.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Date: _____

Judge of the Superior Court