



DEPARTMENT OF WAR
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
6700 TAYLOR AVENUE, SUITE 5902
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December 10, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY (DMA) PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum #4 – Alternative Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management Program

References: (a) United States Code, Title 5, Chapter 5, Sections 571-584, Subchapter IV, "Alternative Means of Dispute Resolution"
(b) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 29, Part 1614
(c) DoD Instruction 5145.05, "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Conflict Management," May 27, 2016
(d) DoD Instruction 5400.11, "DoD Privacy and Civil Liberties Programs," December 8, 2020, as amended
(e) Secretary of War Memorandum, "Implementation of Military Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity Reform Plan," September 30, 2025
(f) DMA Operating Instruction 20-02, "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program," August 28, 2015

Purpose. The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Conflict Management Program enables early action and effective management of unresolved conflict across the agency. As required by references (a) through (e), ADR mends, maintains, and improves relationships by focusing on mutual interests and concerns, opens lines of communication, and offers mutually acceptable solutions to pending disputes. When used appropriately, these processes can help manage conflicts at the lowest level, reducing the high costs (direct and indirect) of prolonged disputes and returning personnel to productive mission focus in service of the Department and its warfighters.

Policy. DMA's policy is to create and maintain a climate of professionalism, opportunity, and positive teamwork within the organization. DMA strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment; nevertheless, conflicts may still arise within the workplace. ADR and conflict management offers a spectrum of techniques available to address and potentially resolve conflict at the lowest level.

- Use ADR as an alternative to litigation or formal administrative procedure to the maximum extent practicable. At a minimum, ADR is offered as a first-line alternative during a complaint intake process to resolve disputes at the earliest possible stage of conflict and at the lowest possible organizational level.
- Use of ADR techniques will be free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal.

- Encourage personnel to identify and address underlying conflict regarding any issue at the earliest stage possible to prevent and avoid disputes.
- ADR is a voluntary and confidential process. Maintain and protect all personally identifiable information collected during the ADR process in accordance with DoD Instruction 5400.11.

The DMA Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office offers ADR in the form of conflict coaching, facilitation, and mediation to promote early action and prompt resolution of workplace conflict.

Conflict Coaching. Leaders looking to assist their team in managing conflict at the lowest level can seek conflict coaching skills to help others open lines of communication, understand each other's positions, and uncover underlying interests. Additionally, certified coaches can guide individuals in solving problems and setting goals through structured conversation addressing common topics such as work-life balance and conflict resolution.

Facilitation. Facilitation is a flexible process for working out interpersonal conflicts at the earliest possible stage with the help of a certified neutral party. The neutral party conducting facilitation is bound to the same standards of conduct of an investigator, such as confidentiality, but the conflict itself does not need to be part of an official complaint process. Facilitation enables early intervention of a conflict that could later grow and negatively impact overall workplace climate.

Mediation. This is the most structured form of ADR used to resolve minor to moderate disputes. Mediation is another voluntary intervention process assisted by an impartial and neutral third party who has zero decision-making authority. Like a facilitator, a mediator assists both parties in opening lines of communication and shifting from positions to underlying interests. The objective of mediation is to assist the parties to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of the issues in dispute.

For detailed information on DMA's ADR and Conflict Management Program, refer to DMA Operating Instruction 20-02. For additional information or questions on the ADR process, please contact the DMA EEO office at dma.meade.hqdma.mbx.dma-eeo@mail.mil.

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