
Policy

The VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York is committed to providing an alternate approach to dispute resolution. To help, a few local staff members have been trained to mediate workplace disputes and complaints. Employees are encouraged to use mediation whenever possible. Mediation helps resolve conflicts in the workplace, at the lowest organization level, in an appropriate and cost-effective manner.

Purpose

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) offers a voluntary, early resolution program. ADR adds an additional avenue for mutually resolving conflicts, disputes, and complaints. Mediation and group facilitation are two aspects of ADR.

The mediation approach offers an alternate way for mutually resolving conflicts, disputes, and complaints. This approach saves time, is less costly, and less adversarial than adjudication or litigation procedures.

Group facilitation is a process similar to mediation. It helps groups of employees understand their differences and find a common resolution to problems. Facilitators from the ADR team help guide the process and aid the group in arriving at their own outcome.

What is mediation?

Mediation is an informal way for employees to resolve workplace disputes. It may involve other employees, managers, supervisors, or colleagues. A neutral person called a mediator assists by helping the parties explore ways to resolve their differences. The goal is to reach an agreement that meets everyone's needs and interests. Mediation is voluntary and confidential. This type of process requires that everyone involved work together to solve the problems. The mediator has no power to make decisions for the group. The parties involved decide what is important and make their decisions based upon those factors. The mediator helps the parties become decision makers through understanding and listening. Concerns are resolved by working together to create options and solutions.



How do I begin the process?

Contact one of the ADR coordinators listed on the back of this brochure or one of the ADR mediators listed on local bulletin boards. These people will be able to discuss your options with you and provide more information on the mediation process.

A mediator from another VA site may be utilized, depending on the nature of the issues. Each mediation will be handled on an individual basis to ensure confidentiality.

Mediators will try to select a neutral location for participants to discuss their issues.

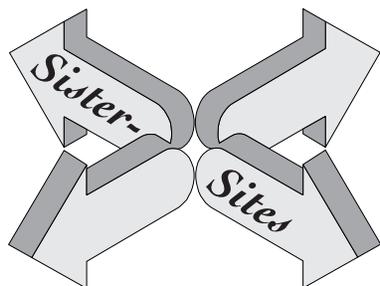


Sister-Site Mediations

Sometimes there are instances that require a higher level of trust, sensitivity, or confidentiality. In these cases, employees may request the services of mediators from other Network facilities. To help in the assignment of mediators, two sets of “sister sites” have been established:

Albany and Syracuse
Canandaigua, Bath, and Western
New York

Please contact your local coordinator if you need to request a mediator from a sister site.



Local Coordinators

Albany

Kara Jordan (518) 626-6737

Bath

Julie Santacroce (607) 664-4528

Sandy Dolan (607) 664-4523

Canandaigua

Robin Johnson (585) 393-7759

Syracuse

David Johnson (315) 476-7461

Ext. 3561

VA Western New York Healthcare System

Sherry Piegza (716) 862-6556

Network ADR Coordinator

Doug Bender

Human Resources Manager
Albany VA Medical Center
113 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208
(518) 626-6772

For additional information about employee services, go to the intranet at:
vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/employee.html

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ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION Program



Providing mediation services to help employees find solutions to workplace problems.