Environmental Conflict Resolution (ECR)

ECR is defined as third-party assisted conflict prevention and collaborative problem-solving in the context of environmental, public lands, or natural resources issues or conflicts, including matters related to energy, transportation, and land use.

The OCPR is available to assist DOE Programs in determining the appropriate ECR process and/or neutral to utilize in preventing or resolving an environmental dispute.

Training

OCPR can provide customized training for your office's unique needs in the areas of communication, negotiation, mediation skills, and conflict resolution.

Benefits of Mediation

- ✓ **Voluntary:** You choose whether to participate at every stage of the process.
- ✓ **Informal:** The process is informal and flexible; representatives are not required, but you may bring a friend, co-worker, an NTEU representative, or an attorney.
- ✓ **Confidential:** You speak without fear that your words will be used against you in another proceeding.
- ✓ **No Risk:** You may retain the right to address the issue formally, e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity and Grievance procedures.
- ✓ **Quick:** The majority of mediations are completed in one or two sessions.
- ✓ **Self-Determination:** The participants control the outcome.
- ✓ **Preserves Relationships:** You resolve your dispute while building a better relationship with the other person(s).
- ✓ **Creative:** You develop innovative solutions and move away from the typical win/lose results of more adversial proceedings.
- ✓ **Cost Free:** There is no charge to you for participating in the mediation process

For Information Contact:

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Hearings and Appeals
Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution (HG-6)
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585-1615
(located at 950 L'Enfant Plaza, 7th floor)
Phone: 202-287-1566 or 202-586-6972

OfficeofConflictPreventionandResolution@hq.doe.gov

www.oha.energy.gov (*click on OCPR homepage*)

OFFICE OF
CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION
ocpr
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

For OCPR services contact:
202-287-1566 • 202-586-6972

The mission of the Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution (OCPR) is to increase the understanding and use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) throughout the Department pursuant to the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 (ADRA). Although the ADRA focuses on issues already in controversy, OCPR has expanded its mission to encourage employees, program offices, contractors and other interested stakeholders to anticipate conflict and take action before conflict begins.

What is ADR?

ADR includes a variety of dispute resolution processes (including, but not limited to, conciliation, facilitation, mediation, fact finding, minitrials, arbitration, and use of ombuds, or any combination thereof) that assist people in avoiding a more costly forum such as litigation. Mediation is the ADR method that is most often utilized at DOE.

When should I contact OCPR?

Sooner not later

- When you think a situation may develop into a conflict
- When a conflict arises and you are considering engaging in an ADR process
- When you are looking for customized training for your organization

Headquarters Mediation Program for Workplace Conflicts

OCPR believes that many workplace conflicts are based on miscommunication and that it is best to resolve these issues as soon as possible before they enter a more formal process.

At DOE, a professionally trained impartial mediator, sometimes referred to as a neutral, assists participants in discussing their issues in a productive manner. The mediator does not take sides or make evaluations but rather furthers the discussion and helps the participants express their concerns and identify options that are workable for all involved.

Mediation is voluntary. All participants must agree to engage in the process. Participants are welcome to bring a family member, co-worker, union representative, or attorney to the meeting. Mediations are cost free and strictly confidential. Information is shared only with those within DOE who need to know in order to achieve a settlement. By engaging in mediation, participants do not give up any rights that they may have under a more formal EEO or grievance process.

To request mediation, you may contact OCPR by calling (202) 287-1566 or (202) 586-6972. You also may make requests through the Office of Civil Rights, HQ Employee and Labor Management Relations or the NTEU.

Technology Transfer Ombudsman (TTOs)

Technology Transfer refers to the process by which knowledge, intellectual property or capabilities developed at DOE's National Laboratories and other facilities, are transferred to any other external entity—including private industry, academia, state and local governments, or other government entities—to meet public and private needs.

TTOs have been appointed at these laboratories and facilities to prevent or resolve issues at the earliest possible time. OCPR works closely with the TTOs to facilitate these efforts, to share best practices, and to provide training as needed.

Contracts

OCPR is available to discuss inclusion of ADR provisions in contracts, to assist in determining whether ADR is appropriate, and to find neutrals for specific disputes.

me•di•a•tion

Mediation is a process in which an impartial third party facilitates communication and negotiation and promotes voluntary decision making by the participants in the dispute.