

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Information Sheet

Recognizing that many civil disputes can be resolved without the time and expense of traditional civil litigation, the Yolo County Superior Court strongly encourages parties in civil cases to explore and pursue the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

What is Alternative Dispute Resolution?

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is the general term applied to a wide variety of dispute resolution processes which are alternatives to lawsuits. Types of ADR processes include:

Arbitration	Mediation	Neutral Evaluation	Mini-trials
Settlement Conferences	Private Judging	Negotiation, and	Hybrids of these

All ADR processes offer a partial or complete alternative to traditional court litigation for resolving disputes.

What are the advantages of using ADR?

ADR, particularly mediation, can have a number of advantages over traditional court litigation.

- **ADR can save time.** Even in a complex case, a dispute can be resolved through ADR in a matter of months or weeks, while a lawsuit can take years.
- **ADR can save money.** By producing earlier settlements, ADR can save parties and courts money that might otherwise be spent on litigation costs (attorneys fees and court expenses.)
- **ADR provides more participation.** Parties have more opportunity with ADR to express their own interests and concerns, while litigation focuses exclusively on the parties' legal rights and responsibilities.
- **ADR provides more control and flexibility.** Parties can choose the ADR process most appropriate for their particular situation and that will best serve their particular needs.
- **ADR can reduce stress and provide greater satisfaction.** ADR encourages cooperation and communication, while discouraging the adversarial atmosphere found in litigation. Surveys of disputants who have gone through ADR have found that satisfaction with ADR is generally high, especially among those with extensive ADR experience.