



# Dispute Resolution Newsletter

## February 2024



Hello, approved providers and programs:

As we begin a new year, I want to take a moment to recognize the work of the Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution. The council and its subcommittees are busy year-round working to improve dispute resolution in Kansas. Currently, the council is working on several projects, including producing educational mediation videos for the public, drafting dispute resolution materials to circulate to self-help centers, developing best practices and approval requirements to become an approved restorative justice provider, and reviewing rules where issues have been identified to discuss amendments.

The council makeup and some of its duties are described as follows:

- The council has no more than 19 voting members who are appointed to three-year terms.
- Council members represent a variety of disciplines trained in and knowledgeable about dispute resolution.
- The council meets at least four times a year and at other times as necessary to perform its functions.
- Council subcommittees meet monthly and carry out select projects for the group.
- The council advises the director on the administration of the [dispute resolution act](#).
- The council makes recommendations to the director about legislation affecting dispute resolution.
- More information about the Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution in [K.S.A. 5-504](#) and [5-505](#).

Happy New Year,  
**Amanda Jacobsen**

Director of Dispute Resolution  
Office of Judicial Administration

## Dispute Resolution Renewal Season



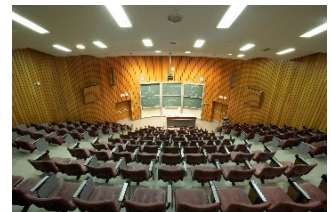
Provider and program dispute resolution renewal applications and fees were to be emailed or postmarked by January 30. If you did not meet the deadline, submit your renewal, the \$50 renewal fee, and a \$25 reinstatement fee (\$75 total). If you qualify for an application fee waiver, you still must submit a \$25 reinstatement fee if you submit your renewal after the deadline.

## Approved Dispute Resolution Provider and Program Lists

We started updating the approved dispute resolution provider and program lists on the [Find An Approved Provider of Program](#) webpage. The approved provider and program lists from 2023 have been removed. As 2024 renewal applications are approved, the lists are updated, and the updated lists are published weekly. The lists include those who indicated they would like their contact information published on the judicial branch website for referral purposes. If you have questions about the list, or your information is listed incorrectly, contact [ADR@kscourts.org](mailto:ADR@kscourts.org).

## 2024 Training and Continuing Education Opportunities

The [Calendar of Approved Training](#) is regularly updated when trainers or programs submit training opportunities to the Office of Judicial Administration. Excellent training opportunities are available to fulfill your 2024 renewal requirements or to complete the requirements for approval in a new category.



## Dispute Resolution Annual Reports

Past [Dispute Resolution Annual Reports](#) are on the judicial branch website. Currently, years 2018 through 2022 are available. Other reports will be added in the coming year. The reports are submitted to the Supreme Court, the governor, and the Legislature to comply with [K.S.A. 5-506\(b\)](#), which requires the director of dispute resolution to report annually on implementing the Dispute Resolution Act.

# Approved Dispute Resolution Program

## Feature: Dispute Resolution Center



Submitted by: Deborah Medlock, Dispute Resolution Specialist / Mediator

[The Dispute Resolution Center](#) in Olathe was founded to help parties in conflict find a path forward. The Dispute Resolution Center offers several types of alternative dispute resolution, including mediation for domestic cases regarding parenting issues, property issues, or both. An increasing number of divorcing couples are choosing mediation rather than traditional litigation to resolve their cases more amicably. An added benefit is that mediation can typically be less costly and less stressful than litigation. Even when cases are contested from the start, it is not uncommon for parties to attend mediation with their attorneys, which often results in settlement instead of trial. The Dispute Resolution Center also offers mediation for general civil cases, ranging from property issues to business disagreements.

The Dispute Resolution Center also offers conciliation, which is a form of alternative dispute resolution most easily described as nonconfidential mediation and includes information going to the court. Depending on what the court requests, when the parties fail to reach an agreement, a conciliation report is prepared. Basic reports include a summary of the parties' positions. Higher level reports also include a summary of information gathered through speaking with references and, at times, recommendations, or suggestions. Conciliation is usually used for co-parenting issues but will sometimes address financial issues as well. The Dispute Resolution Center is also available to provide limited or full family assessments.

Also in the domestic realm, the Dispute Resolution Center is available for parent coordination. Parent coordination is designed with a two-fold goal. A parent coordinator is tasked to help parties carry out court orders, as well as help parties learn how to work together more effectively. The goal of a parent coordinator is to work themselves out of the case.

The Dispute Resolution Center also helps successfully negotiate property division in families, whether the requisite division of property is the result of separation, divorce, or family member death (usually a parent). This process uses mediation to divide items with financial value, sentimental value, or both. In addition to negotiating property division, this service may also include helping find a 'fair' value for items or overseeing removal and physical distribution of property.

One of the more unique services offered by the Dispute Resolution Center is conflict coaching. This form of alternative dispute resolution involves working with people in conflict in a more educational role. Conflict coaching can help either party in a conflict and is also a good fit for a person who recognizes they are uncomfortable in conflict situations or relationships. This service can help a person become more mindful and aware of their choices, and how they are perceived by others. The goal of this type of coaching is to help an individual understand and articulate their goals and how to achieve those goals more effectively.

The Dispute Resolution Center additionally offers a domestic mediation practicum and opportunities for mentor mediator services.

## 2023 Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution

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To promote, encourage, and facilitate alternative dispute resolution services which are accessible and affordable.

— Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution mission statement