



# Mediation Services

## Alternative Dispute Resolution Program

The Seattle Federal Executive Board (SFEB) sponsors the Shared Neutrals Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program to facilitate the use of mediation among federal and public sector agencies. The program provides a pool of federal and public sector employees who are qualified to serve as objective mediators from outside your agency. Advantages of the service are reduced costs, as the program is free of charge and requires minimal paper work. Agencies are encouraged, but not required to have a Mediator in the SFEB ADR program to utilize the services.

### **What is Mediation?**

In mediation, a trained neutral individual helps people discuss and resolve problems, or narrow and clarify issues. The process encourages joint problem solving in which people gain an understanding of each other's points of view. Mediation provides a safe and confidential environment for people to talk through their issues. Participation is voluntary and confidential. When mediation is used, both parties retain control because they each have a role in the final decisions.

### **Why Use Mediation?**

Successful mediation helps agencies avoid time consuming and costly investigations. The average cost of an EEOC complaint from investigations through the final agency decision without a hearing, is over \$20,000. Moreover, the final cost with an agency decision and a hearing, can cost over \$50,000 from start to finish. Can your agency afford NOT to utilize SFEB ADR?

### **When Should Mediation be Used?**

Mediate any time you have an unresolved workplace conflict. Conflict happens at work every day. If ignored, some conflicts increase tensions, lower productivity, and erode trust in the organization. Mediation offers a positive way to settle conflict quickly and informally.

### **Who Can Use FEB FREE Mediation Services?**

Mediation services are available to all member organizations of the Seattle Federal Executive Board and its Federal Executive Association partners. SFEB ADR mediators may mediate anywhere participating agencies are located. SFEB ADR services are FREE; however, the requesting agency is responsible for mileage (outside the local commuting area)/airfare/parking for the mediators, if the mediation requires travel and any logistical support associated with a requested mediation.

### **Who are the Mediators?**

Mediators are federal and public sector employees of agencies that participate in the SFEB ADR program. They come from all types of federal and public sector agencies and levels of jobs. When mediating, these employees serve agencies other than their own. This ensures that they are truly neutral. The mediators have completed at least 40 hours of formal mediation training, many are also

certified by through the State of Washington and have been certified by the SFEB ADR Program of the Seattle Federal Executive Board.

### **What Types of Workplace Disputes are Appropriate for This Service?**

The Program's current mediations are "internal" workplace mediations (Internal means involving employees of participating agencies only). Agencies may choose to limit which types of cases they will refer to the Program. In addition, there are some cases that are not appropriate for mediation through this program, regardless of individual agency policy. The program does not accept the following cases:

- expected to take more than 24 working hours (the vast majority will require fewer than 24 hours)
- both parties do not sign the mediation agreement
- involve criminal activity.

### **The Process**

When all conflicted parties within an agency have agreed to utilize the Seattle FEB ADR Program and signed the Agreement to Mediate, the Agency Liaison will contact SFEB ADR by calling the current Program Manager listed on the Seattle FEB Alternative Dispute Resolution website. The Program Manager will obtain all the necessary information on the case and assign a mediator. The mediator will contact the Agency Liaison to arrange a time and place for mediation. The Agency Liaison can provide necessary agency background. All information regarding the mediation is confidential. Further details on the process are available in the SFEB ADR Handbook.

### **Agency Participation**

To enter the Program, agencies must fill out and submit the Agency Agreement to Participate form on the SFEB ADR website after being signed by the local agency head.

Note: It is the responsibility of each agency to promptly notify the SFEB ADR Program Manager of any change to their agency liaison.

The SFEB ADR Program Manager is available to explain the benefits of the Program to participating agencies considering participation.

For more information, please contact Seattle Federal Executive Board Alternative Dispute Resolution Program Manager, David Bayliff, [David.M.Bayliff@faa.gov](mailto:David.M.Bayliff@faa.gov) or (303) 819-3238 / <https://seattle.feb.gov/dispute-resolution/>