

3 Steps to Volunteer as a Settlement Conference Attorney

in the
DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND
Day of Trial ADR Program

WHY VOLUNTEER IN THE DISTRICT COURT DAY OF TRIAL ADR PROGRAM?

1. Earn pro bono hours for reporting to the Court of Appeals
2. Assist the District Court in advancing settlement conferences as a distinct ADR process
3. Use your legal experience to help resolve conflict and conserve party and judicial resources
4. Support parties engaging in conversation about their case and participating in the outcome of their case

STEP 1

Complete the District Court of Maryland ADR Volunteer Application for Settlement Conference Attorneys* (Rule 17-304(c)(1))

Application available online at www.mdcourts.gov/district/adr/volunteers.html

STEP 2

Attend the District Court's New Settlement Conference Attorney Volunteer Orientation Program (Rule 17-304(b)(3)(D))

(a 6.5 hour continuing ADR education program)

STEP 3

Agree to abide by

District Court of Maryland ADR Office Policies and Procedures including:

***the Maryland Standards of Conduct for Court-Designated Arbitrators, Fact
finders, Neutral Evaluators, and Settlement Conference practitioners***
(as adopted by the Maryland Court of Appeals, Rule 17-304(b)(3)(A));

**Agree to periodic monitoring as part of the District Court ADR Office's
Quality Assurance Initiative** (Rule 17-304(b)(3)(B));

Complete ADR Forms on your scheduled volunteer date; and,

Commit to provide availability to volunteer on at least 4 dates annually.

** Minimum applicant qualifications: be a member in good standing with the Maryland Bar and possess at least 3 years of experience in the active practice of law with substantial civil litigation experience in the District Court of Maryland (Rule 17-304(b)(3)(C)).*

Quality Assurance

Components of Settlement Conference Attorney Quality Assurance Program

1. Complete a District Court ADR Volunteer Application (Md. Rule 17-304(c)(1));
2. Attend **New Volunteer Settlement Conference Attorney Orientation**;
3. Participate in an **On-Site Orientation**;
4. Participate in the Settlement Conference Attorney Review Process;
5. Agree to submit to Periodic Monitoring; and,
6. Comply with the procedures and requirements posted on the ADR Office's website relating to diligence and quality assurance (Md. Rule 17-304(b)(3)(E)).

New Volunteer Settlement Conference Attorney Orientation and Training

A full day training and orientation (typically in Annapolis and as warranted, regionally) offered annually to educate and familiarize new volunteers to the Day of Trial ADR Program with the District Court's jurisdiction, case referrals, ADR Office policies and procedures, Maryland Rules of Procedure – Title 17 (ADR in the Courts), ADR volunteer commitments and obligations, ADR forms, ADR scheduling processes, ethical obligations and Standards of Conduct for Settlement Conference Attorneys, and best practices, among other topics.

On-Site Orientation

A meeting with your Regional ADR Programs Director on the first scheduled date to volunteer in the local Day of Trial ADR Program to become familiar with local procedures, court facilities, ADR forms, and to be introduced to local court staff.

Settlement Conference Attorney Review Process

A quality assurance initiative to provide a new volunteer Settlement Conference Attorney with hands-on support in the local District Court Day of Trial ADR Program alongside a Lead District Court settlement conference attorney or ADR Office staff member. On the Settlement Conference Attorney's first scheduled appearance in the Day of Trial ADR program (typically coordinated with the On-Site Orientation), the Settlement Conference Attorney may either:

OBSERVE A SESSION (optional)

Observe a Lead Settlement Conference Attorney conduct a settlement conference and correctly complete ADR forms. Debrief with the Lead Settlement Conference Attorney after the ADR session.

CONDUCT A SESSION AND BE REVIEWED (required)

Conduct a settlement conference, complete ADR forms while being observed and supported by either a Lead Settlement Conference Attorney or an ADR Office staff member. Debrief with the Lead Settlement Conference Attorney or ADR Office staff member after the session.

A case is considered an ADR session if the participants agree to participate in the settlement conference, sign the Agreement to Participate in ADR form, and engage in a discussion about resolving the case (even if the session does not result in a resolution).

DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND, ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) OFFICE