



# ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION SYSTEM Fiscal Year 2023 Report



**Phil Johnson**  
State Director

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION ACT

The purpose of the Dispute Resolution Act, which was enacted in 1983, is to:  
**“provide to all people of this state convenient access to dispute resolution proceedings which are fair, effective, inexpensive and expeditious.”**

In 1986, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma adopted the rules and procedures for the Dispute Resolution Act, 12 O.S. 1801 et seq., providing guidelines for the establishment of dispute resolution centers. A 15-member Dispute Resolution Advisory Board appointed by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma serves in an advisory role to the Administrative Director of the Courts who oversees the Alternative Dispute Resolution System. The State Director of the Alternative Dispute Resolution System manages the program operations which are based out of the Administrative Office of the Courts. The thirteen (13) regionally based Early Settlement Centers operate under the authority of the Oklahoma Dispute Resolution Act and are funded\* by a \$7 district court civil filing fee. Annual renewable grants are awarded to the sponsoring agency by the Administrative Director of the Courts. The Tulsa Program receives partial funding & the City of Norman program is self-funded.

There were  
**5,790**  
cases referred to  
Early Settlement  
Mediation in  
FY 2023 an 11%  
increase over  
FY 2022



## DISPUTE RESOLUTION ADVISORY BOARD

- Ted Roberts**, Chairman  
Academic Community
- Terry Winn**  
Member at Large
- Erick Motsinger**  
Department of Corrections
- Todd Gibson**  
Law-Enforcement
- Honorable Barbara Hatfield**  
The Judiciary
- Stan L. Foster**  
Legal Profession
- Bonnie L. Clift**  
Social Services
- Jane F. Wheeler**  
Consumer Organizations
- Frank Turner**  
Member at Large
- Jason Hicks**  
District Attorneys
- Chris Schroder**  
Local Government
- Mike Cotrill**  
Business Organizations
- Tracy Osburn**  
State Government
- Lou Kerr**  
Member at Large
- Jane McConnell**  
Retired Citizen Organizations
- Jari Askins**  
Director of the Courts  
ex officio member



## SERVICES OFFERED

Early Settlement Centers serve all 77 counties in Oklahoma offering **FREE** mediation

services to all who wish to negotiate interpersonal matters. Cases resolved by mediation may involve money, property, business transactions, personal relationships, harassment, animal disturbances, neighborhood disturbances, assault, child permanency, or other matters. The disputes may be with mates, ex-mates, other family members, neighbors, property owners or tenants, consumers or merchants.

## MEDIATION SERVICES

- Small Claims/Civil
- Child Custody
- Divorce
- Adult Guardianship
- Child Permanency
- Parent/School
- Real Estate
- Neighbors
- Family
- Consumer/Merchant
- Community
- Landlord/Tenant

## WHO ARE THE MEDIATORS?

Early Settlement Mediators are community volunteers who have completed specialized mediation training, observed by the program director or certified volunteer mediator, and are certified by the Administrative Director of the Courts. Mediators assist the parties in negotiating and resolving their own problems. There are over 350 active community volunteer mediators statewide.



West Program Volunteer Mediators



NEW North Program Certified Mediators

VISIT [adr.oscn.net](http://adr.oscn.net)





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Agency Mediators

### STATE AGENCY MEDIATION PROGRAMS

There are fifteen (15) state agencies with mediation programs. The Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) program serves all state agencies offering employee mediation services. The volunteer agency mediators use the facilitative mediation model and are trained through the Alternative Dispute Resolution System.

### PEER RESOLUTIONS FOR OKLAHOMA STUDENTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts, Alternative Dispute Resolution Program partnered with the University of Central Oklahoma in January, 2021 to begin a statewide Peer Mediation Program.



Andrew Aldridge  
State Director

Students are taught to use conflict as a positive force that can lessen the detrimental effects of conflict while increasing a student's social skills and promoting a positive self-image. In the words of the first lady on the Oklahoma Supreme Court (1982), Honorable Justice Alma Wilson,

*“If we teach Oklahoma’s young people about resolving conflicts in a peaceable manner the impact will be far reaching for future generations.”*



### LAW SCHOOL STUDENT MEDIATORS

All three (3) Oklahoma law schools participate in a student extern program offered through the local Early Settlement programs. The law students are required to complete specialized mediation training and become certified during the course of the externship. Participants get mediation experience conducting small claims, real estate, and civil mediations. Many students choose to participate in a second externship mediating family and divorce cases. Over 450 law students have participated since the program was established in 2010.



Supreme Court Summer Law Interns

## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION SYSTEM Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023 (JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023)

CASE TYPES FY 2023	CASES REFERRED	CASES MEDIATED	AGREEMENT RATE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS TRAINED
Civil/Small Claims	3,206	2,345	64%	9,399	162
Family/Divorce	2,116	1,546	70%	7,438	26
Child Permanency	242	183	76%	1,894	6
Adult Guardianship	23	19	95%	100	0
Adjunct Settlement	203	114	65%	456	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5,790</b> ↑11%	<b>4,207</b>		<b>19,287</b>	<b>194</b>