



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health
Office of the Ombudsman
Center for Cooperative Resolution
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Date: October 16th, 2015
To: The NIH Community
From: Howard Gadlin, Ph.D.
Re: Statement in Support of ADR for Conflict Resolution Day

Dear Colleagues,

As the nation's medical research agency, The National Institutes of Health (NIH) seeks fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.

Whenever scientific or administrative teams work together to accomplish goals as important as these, disagreements and conflict are likely to occur. Concerns mishandled or left unresolved can negatively impact our organization and impair our ability to serve the American people. Alternative Dispute Resolution is one way to work through concerns in a fair and equitable manner. Coaching, facilitated conversations, mediation and group facilitation can improve workplace relationships and the ability to work effectively with others. Informal, collaborative and fair approaches can also create the conditions necessary for constructive disagreement and resolution.

We encourage all staff to consider ADR to address concerns, tensions, and conflicts that inevitably arise in the workplace. The NIH offers many resources to help all employees to understand, engage in and work through conflicts, including the Office of the Ombudsman, Center for Cooperative Resolution. The NIH Office of the Ombudsman is a confidential, neutral, and independent resource that provides informal assistance to NIH scientists, administrators, and all staff to address work and lab-related issues.

Conflict Resolution Day on October 15th, 2015 reminds us that Alternative Dispute Resolution is a valuable approach to address conflict, strengthen working relationships, and carry out the NIH mission in service to the American people.

Sincerely,

Howard Gadlin, Ph.D.
Ombudsman
Director, Office of the Ombudsman
Center for Cooperative Resolution