



DRS DIALOGUE

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DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA



James Doran,
DRS Summer Intern



Hello, everybody! My name is James Doran, and I am a current pre-law student at Christopher Newport University (Go Captains!) majoring in History. This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to intern with Dispute Resolution Services at Virginia's Supreme Court, and I have learned so much.

My summer began by working with Mrs. Terry Dysick on a new informational brochure about parent education seminars, as well as getting to observe a few parent education seminars myself.

I also had the pleasure of working with Mr. Michael Barr to review the current virtual Continuing Mediator Education (CME) content to assess their relevance in 2025, which gave me the opportunity to learn from them myself!

Additionally, I got to work with Mr. Jon Lamp in observing the current research project regarding virtual mediator feedback forms, an ongoing project that is very exciting (and that I am sure most of you have heard about). I got some advice from Mr. Jordan Blackstone about my journey to law school, and he generously shared some tips and tricks for preparing for the law school admissions test (LSAT).

Finally, with Mr. Dan Wassink, I had quite an interesting task—review Virginia's current ethical standards for mediators, and compare them with those of other states, and see how Virginia's could be improved.

I researched in guidelines from Washington, Kansas, Florida, North Carolina, Michigan, and Maryland, and made note of several things that the current committees reviewing our guidelines may want to explore when re-vamping Virginia's standards!

In addition to all of this, I also got to travel to observe and help prepare for the information session led by DRS at the new training for Virginia's newest JDR, GDC, and Circuit Court judges.

As I write this in late July, just before the end of my internship, and I am so honored to have had the opportunity this summer to work for such wonderful people at DRS. I worked a lot, learned a lot, and most of all, had fun through it all.

I look forward to taking what I learned this summer from DRS with me to law school next fall, and further advance the practice of mediation and alternative dispute resolution in a world that needs it now more than ever.

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MEDIATION INVOICES: REMINDERS AND TIPS

Jon Lamp,
ADR Program Specialist



Recently, our office announced that the Electronic Voucher Payment System (EVPS) will be required to request reimbursement for all GDC and custody, visitation, and support (CVS) mediations. While EVPS accounts for over 90% of vouchers submitted this year, I wanted to share a few reminders and tips for using and joining EVPS.

- EVPS will be mandatory beginning October 1st, 2025. This means that all requests for payment relating to court-referred GDC or CVS cases must be submitted through EVPS.
 - In the rare instance where a payment can't be submitted due to an error, you should reach out to evpssupport@vacourts.gov to report the issue and find the appropriate remedy.
 - For GDC mediations where a request can't be made through EVPS, the vendor will need to provide either the original case filing paperwork or DC-400 Mediation Orientation Order of Referral. We recommend holding on to one or both documents for each GDC case until after receiving payment.
- To register for EVPS, you must:
 - Be a registered vendor with OES. You can send our office a Virginia [W-9 form](#) to register at any time. OES typically takes one week to process new forms, after which time you will be considered a registered vendor.
 - You must request an OES Identification Number (OES ID) from a clerk's office. The number will expire after 48 hours, and only registered vendors can use the OES ID to join EVPS.
 - After requesting an OES ID, you will receive an email with the next registration steps. More information can be found on pages 3-6 of the [EVPS Mediator User Guide](#).
- Each EVPS submission should be for a single mediation. A single mediation may involve multiple case numbers, or multiple sessions.
 - Once a mediation is over, it may be referred back to mediation by the court. In such scenarios, the second mediation can be billed separately.
 - In CVS cases where there is an appointment for custody/visitation AND support, a single EVPS submission should be sent reflecting both appointments. Instructions for doing so can be found on pages 35 and 36 of the EVPS Mediator user Guide. NOTE: If you do not see the button shown on page 36, you may need to click on the three horizontal bars by the voucher number on the left side of the screen.
- EVPS requests should be submitted within 30 days of the mediation's conclusion. This is especially important for unlawful detainer cases that may be expunged.

If you run into any issues submitting a payment or if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us or to our EVPS support team!

THAT CALLS FOR CELEBRATION!

Dan Wassink, DRS Manager



When the frustrations of facing the ups-and-downs and daily grind of life begin to mount, it can be refreshing to pause, take a step back, and appreciate just how far we've come.

That was my thought on the evening of August 23 as I enjoyed the company of fellow supporters of mediation in the gorgeous, ornate atmosphere of The Shed at Historic Main Street Station in Richmond. The elegant venue was the perfect spot for a Celebration Gala to mark the 40th anniversary of mediation in Virginia's courts.

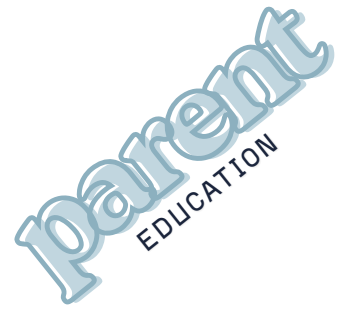
In May 1985, Court Service Unit managers and various stakeholders met at Richard Bland College in Petersburg to explore the use of mediation in Virginia's Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts. The goal was to give parents a greater role in deciding custody, visitation and support issues; while also helping the courts reduce their dockets. That meeting soon paid dividends in the creation of the Joint ADR Committee in 1986, the Virginia Mediation Network in 1987, and our very own Office of Dispute Resolution Services in 1991.

Speakers at the August 23rd Gala (besides yours truly!) included mediation pioneers such as Karen Asaro, who attended the 1985 meeting in Petersburg; and Robert Baldwin, who served as Executive Secretary from 1976 to 2005. The evening was capped off with remarks and a celebratory toast by The Honorable Stephen R. McCullough, a Justice on the Supreme Court of Virginia since 2016.

The Celebration Gala was the brainchild of Pamela Struss, Executive Director of the Greater Richmond Community Mediation Center. Many thanks to Pam and her dedicated group of volunteers who made this unforgettable evening possible!

DRS IN THE FIELD

PARENT EDUCATION SEMINAR OBSERVATIONS



Terry Dysick,
Parent Education Coordinator

Since joining the DRS team on January 27, I have connected with and responded to the parent education providers with the goal of building a tighter network and enhanced delivery of qualitative seminars.

Monthly, I meet individually with providers and observe classes in- person and virtually. To date, I have observed 11 parent education classes and am pleased to share creative talented work is being provided across the regions and evaluations are consistently satisfactory or higher.

JUDICIAL CONFERENCE FOR DISTRICT COURTS

In the first week of October, I will join Dan as we attend this conference in Virginia Beach. In lieu of formal presentations, we will bring personality to the exhibitor's table, chock full of promotional and practical information related to all things ADR!

We will be available Tuesday and Wednesday during the conference, distributing materials, encouraging participation via referrals and answering questions. DRS is eager to captivate the foot traffic and make a positive collaborative impact!

DRS also wishes to thank Caroline Kirkpatrick and the entire Educational Services team at OES for carving out time and space for us at these events and with their above-and-beyond support of our efforts.

DRS IN THE FIELD (CONT.)

MAKING THE CASE FOR MEDIATION

Dan Wassink,
DRS Manager



Roughly half of Virginia's certified mediators are also attorneys. The best way to increase that percentage in the future is to convince tomorrow's lawyers of the merits of mediation before they begin their legal careers, or even enter law school, for that matter. That was my goal on September 11 when I traveled to Christopher Newport University in Newport News to speak to students in an Introduction to American Law class led by Senior Justice William Mims of the Virginia Supreme Court (the same class I attended in 2024, which yielded our excellent summer intern, James Doran).



Senior Justice William Mims with CNU Pre-Law class

In introducing the approximately 25 students to the work of DRS, I stressed our office's role in supporting and promoting the use of alternative dispute resolution as an Access to Justice tool. I also highlighted what I see as the many benefits of ADR to both parties and courts, sprinkling in some personal observations of the transformative power of mediation. Before wrapping up by answering many excellent questions from the students, I appealed to their future attorney selves to embrace mediation if they truly wish to do what's best for their clients and advocate for their best interests.

Many thanks once again to Senior Justice Mims for the invitation and for his unwavering support of mediation, which stem from his belief that "lawyers have the high calling to be peacemakers."

DRS IN THE FIELD (CONT.)

JUDICIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Michael Barr,
ADR Analyst

On August 12th, the Supreme Court of Virginia hosted the Judicial Management Program on the 6th floor Courts Conference Center. A team from DRS (Dan, Terry, and Michael) had a slot on the first day to bend the ear of the new clerks from all over the state of Virginia about the importance of mediation and parent education.

Dan introduced the clerks to our services, the goals of ADR, and how courts can support mediation. I picked up with a quiz on the legal statutes authorizing mediation with the hope of encouraging them to refer parties to an orientation and develop a good relationship with the coordinator, if their court has one. And Terry shared how vital it is for parents and their children, that parties in a contested JDR case attend a Parent Education Seminar with an approved provider.

A new clerk receives much training on how their role relates to their court and the Court – from human resources and fiscal matters to judges and their own professional development, and only a few (like DRS) acquaints them with how they might relate to the public.

We received good questions, shared the DRS Brochure and, overall, suggested that they have a role to play to increase party access to justice through understanding the benefits of early resolution of disputes.

ATTENTION MEDIATORS!

Michael Barr,
ADR Analyst



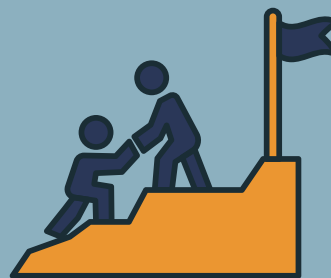
Do you know when your certification expires? If you did not recertify last year, then odds are that it is your turn in 2025! Now is the season to take any remaining courses you may need that are approved for Continuing Mediator Education (CME) credit, or to submit evidence of coursework taken that helped in your practice and may qualify for CME. To recertify, you must present evidence (usually the ADR 1010 verification of training form) of at least 10 credits, 2 of which must be approved for mediator ethics credit. We have a record of any carryover earned from your last recertification that will count toward your total as non-ethics credit.

For more information on how to recertify, what forms to use, and how to find trainings or receive approval for a course, please see the [Recertification page](#). Here is a link to the [Advanced Training Calendar](#) and a couple of the [important forms](#):

- [Application for Mediator Recertification, ADR 1003](#)
- [Mediator Application for CME Course Certification, ADR 2002](#)

ATTENTION MENTORS!

Michael Barr,
ADR Analyst



Do you have casework that you could share with a mentee? If you are in the position of having access to cases (court-referred or private) and might be open to business to allow a mentee to gain some valuable experience, please let us know.

We would only share your contact information with mentee's that have reached out to us – it would not be publicized. We know it can sometimes be hard to connect mentees with experienced mentor-mediators to co-mediate, so DRS wants to be part of the link to make that connection.

Please send an email to drsapplications@vacourts.gov

JSVS ENHANCEMENTS COMING!

Dan Wassink,
DRS Manager

Many JDR court Mediation Coordinators rely on the Juvenile Secure Viewing System (JSVS) to do their jobs effectively. JSVS provides Coordinators with critical information, such as case images, that allows them to assess whether a case is appropriate, and to prepare, for mediation.

However, no system is perfect, and for years some JDR Coordinators have been asking for enhancements that would provide additional information, or structure it in a different way.

Last February, DRS reached out to experienced JDR Coordinators and others to ask them which JSVS enhancements would benefit them the most. Their feedback was passed along to Christi Eads, JDR Court Services Manager. After consulting with her team, Christi reported that four of the suggested enhancements would be implemented – some sooner than later due to varying levels of complexity. The approved enhancements involve issues such as consolidation of docket information, whether a party requires an interpreter, etc. The enhancements were shared with all JDR Mediation Coordinators in early September, and we have already received feedback that the coming changes will be of great value to them.

Many thanks to Christi and her team for their efforts on behalf of the mediation community!

THANK YOU

for all you do!

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SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

Have an idea for a future article?

Submit your ideas to

disputeresolution@vacourts.gov

As always, thank you for all you do for ADR in Virginia.

