

Superior Court  
County of El Dorado  
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## Mediation Week March 14-20, 2010

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### **Placerville, CA, March 12, 2010:**

On March 12, 2009, the Judicial Council adopted a standing resolution recognizing the third week of March as "Mediation Week". It is the goal of the El Dorado County Superior Court to expand and improve its mediation and alternative dispute resolution programs and to increase public awareness of and use of this service. The efforts of many dedicated professionals are critical to the success of court mediation programs. In particular, the Court would like to acknowledge the volunteer attorney mediators and community members who help make our programs so successful.

### **Benefits of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)**

Using ADR has a variety of benefits, depending on the type of ADR process used and the circumstances of the particular case. Some potential benefits of ADR are summarized below.

#### **Save Time**

A dispute often can be settled or decided much sooner with ADR; often in a matter of months, even weeks, while bringing a lawsuit to trial can take a year or more.

#### **Save Money**

When cases are resolved earlier through ADR, the parties may save some of the money they would have spent on attorney fees, court costs, experts' fees, and other litigation expenses.

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### **Increase Control Over the Process and the Outcome**

In most ADR processes, parties have more opportunity to tell their side of the story than they do at trial. Some ADR processes, such as mediation, allow the parties to fashion creative resolutions that are not available in a trial. Other ADR processes, such as arbitration, allow the parties to choose an expert in a particular field to decide the dispute.

### **Preserve Relationships**

ADR can be a less adversarial and hostile way to resolve a dispute. For example, an experienced mediator can help the parties effectively communicate their needs and point of view to the other side. This can be an important advantage where the parties have a relationship to preserve.

### **Increase Satisfaction**

In a trial, there is typically a winner and a loser. The loser is not likely to be happy, and even the winner may not be completely satisfied with the outcome. ADR can help the parties find win-win solutions and achieve their real goals. This, along with all of ADR's other potential advantages, may increase the parties' overall satisfaction with both the dispute resolution process and the outcome.

### **Improve Attorney-Client Relationships**

Attorneys may also benefit from ADR by being seen as problem-solvers. Quick, cost-effective, and satisfying resolutions are likely to produce happier clients.

If you are interested in learning more about mediation, please visit the El Dorado County Superior Court website at [www.eldoradocourt.org](http://www.eldoradocourt.org) and click on "Child Custody Mediation" or "Alternative Dispute Resolution". You can also visit the California Judicial Branch's website at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov) for general information about mediation.