

Brief History of San Mateo County's MAP Family Law ADR Program

The Family Law ADR program initially began in May of 1996 as part of the Family Law Section of the San Mateo County Bar Association. The Multi-Option ADR Project assumed leadership of the program in February of 2000. The current program coordinator, Monica Rands Preuss, oversees the program, which provides an opportunity for parties to use mediation or arbitration as an alternative to going to court.

The Family Law program has two components: a panel of private neutrals that provide mediation and arbitration; and on-site mediation and settlement conferencing by the staff attorney-mediator.

An Advisory Committee assists with program planning, policy and community outreach. Past projects include the creation of a local form, "Notice of ADR Options" in 2004, and the revision of the local rules for family law during the transition to a direct calendar system.

The court's ADR web site was created and went live in 2005. From this site, users may download the ADR program registration form, view a series of topics in the "Frequently Asked Questions" section, and search the ADR panel database by name, location, fee, etc.