



Institute for Dispute Resolution Oklahoma State University

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FACT SHEET

Oklahoma Agriculture Mediation Program

What Is the Oklahoma Agriculture Mediation Program? (OAMP)

The Oklahoma Agriculture Mediation Program (OAMP) is a program of the Institute for Dispute Resolution (IDR). IDR is the USDA certified state mediation provider for the State of Oklahoma. Located in the Seretean Wellness Center on the campus of Oklahoma State University, IDR provides dispute resolution services which relate to Oklahoma agriculture, rural living, agribusiness, the environment, natural resources, and rural business and industry.

OAMP is a free mediation service available to Oklahomans that would like assistance with resolving all types of agricultural and rural living issues, and to agricultural producers, their lenders, and other people that have received an adverse decision from any of the USDA agencies. USDA agencies—Farm Services Administration, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development—offer mediation to anyone who has received an adverse decision as part of the informal appeals process, in an attempt to resolve the problem early and in the most effective way.

Who Do We Serve?

- Oklahoma farmers & ranchers
- Ag borrowers & lenders
- Anyone directly affected by the actions of USDA
- Rural families, neighbors & business associates

What Is Mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary process in which people involved in a dispute agree to meet in a confidential setting to attempt to work out a solution on their own. A neutral professional (the mediator) helps people discuss the disagreement, identify options that might resolve the problem, and work out a solution they can all agree with. Mediators facilitate the discussion and help structure the process; they do not give legal advice and have no authority to decide the outcome. If an agreement is reached in mediation, the terms will be written down and signed by both parties.

Many disputes can be successfully resolved through mediation. For OAMP cases that involve a USDA agency, parties who agree to disagree still report that the mediation helped them reach a better understanding of the regulations and the reason for the agency's decision.

Not sure if mediation is right for your situation? Contact us! We will explain your options and determine if mediation can help with your situation.

What Issues Can Be Mediated?

- Farm credit & loan servicing
- Loan delinquency
- Feasible farm plans
- Foreclosures
- Farm program issues, including conservation contracts
- Rural Development programs
- Agricultural & rural living issues that do not involve a USDA agency

What Are the Benefits of Mediation?

- May resolve problems within producer's financial means
- Lower cost alternative to appeals, litigation, and bankruptcy
- Resolves matters in less time than formal appeals or litigation
- Reduces stress caused by lengthy litigation and unresolved conflict
- Promotes good working relationships by helping people talk openly, ask questions, and come to a better understanding about the disagreement
- You decide the outcome

What Does Mediation Cost?

OAMP is sponsored by USDA and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. OAMP mediation services are provided free for all types of agricultural and rural living issues.