



The Abuja Multi- door Court House (AMDC)

The AMDC is a court-annexed program that offers a Variety of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) Processes. The "multi-door" refers to the various Options available at the AMDC including case Evaluation, mediation, and arbitration, conciliation and Complex case management.

Cases are matched with an appropriate process and Neutral. More than 40 skilled, experienced mediators, Case evaluators and arbitrators are available at the AMDC.

An independent evaluation will find greater satisfaction among attorneys and clients who participated in AMDC processes than among those who used Traditional court procedures. We are confident that those who use the AMDC services will use it again and recommend it to others.

Commencement of Action at the AMDC

STAGE I

1) Request Form (Form 1) is filled and filed at the AMDC by initiating party, attaching a brief Statement of issues (4 copies).

2) Within 7 days of filing a Request Form at the AMDC. Notice of Referral is sent to the other party (ies) by the ADR Registrar along with a Submission Form (Form 2). Memorandum to parties (Form 3) and a copy of the Applicant's Statement of Issues.

3) Within 7 days. The Responding party(ies) is/are to return the duly completed Submission Form to the AMDC, indicating submission to the ADR Processes and certification to the receipt and understanding of the Memorandum to Parties.

4) Four copies of the Respondent's brief Statement of Issues is to be attached.

STAGE 2

5) The ADR Registrar confirms receipt of the Statement of Issues between parties. Thereafter, Intake Screening is carried out and a pre-session meeting may be convened with the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO). Here, the process is explained, issues clarified, interest identified and an ADR process

agreed upon. At this stage, the DRO provides the parties with a Confirmation of Attendance Form (Form 4) and a Confidentiality agreement (Form C). Which are to be filled and signed by the parties. Also the bio- data of the recommended neutral (Mediators or Arbitrators) is given to the parties so that they can select the neutral of their choice.

STAGE 3

6) An ADR Session is scheduled tentatively, and a Notice sent to the Mediator or Arbitrator along with the Disclosure Form. The Mediator or Arbitrator is to reply to the Notice within 7 days accepting or declining his nomination with the duly completed Disclosure Form returned to the ADR Registrar.

7) A Mediation or Arbitration session is convened.

How Does It Really Work?

The AMDC process starts with a Screening Conference, which serves as the primary diagnostic tool to determine the needs of each case. An experienced Dispute Resolution officer (DRO) conducts the conference, which takes about 30-45 minutes, the conference is confidential. Parties or counsel must be prepared to discuss case substance, procedure and dynamics.

The goal of the Screening Conference is to resolve procedural problems and to discuss dispute resolution process. The screener reviews the full range of AMDC dispute resolution options, helps the parties decide how the case should proceed, and explains the scheduling. The screener usually makes a recommendation, but the parties and their counsel always have the final decision.

If the parties decide to participate in one of the ADR options, the screener presents the list of Neutrals and or may assign a neutral based on his or her content-area, expertise and the dynamics of the case. The selection is subject to the approval of all parties.

What Kind of Cases Does the AMDC Handle?

Whether it is a commercial, employment, banking, maritime, energy, a family or business dispute, the AMDC provides clients and their attorneys with effective alternatives for resolving disputes.

Cases come in to the AMDC in several ways and at any stage of litigation, or even before the filing of a lawsuit. Cases may be referred by judges or selected randomly from the cause list of the courts.

The AMDC also welcomes walk-in cases when all or one of the parties and/or attorneys agree to come to the AMDC or there is a provision for arbitration or ADR process in an agreement.

What Are The Alternative Processes Offered?

The alternative processes to litigation which the AMDC Offers in resolving disputes are Mediation, conciliation early neutral evaluation and arbitration. These processes are to supplement litigation and not to supplant it.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF USING THE AMDC

- 1) It saves time and money by producing early settlements. Even where ADR does not produce an immediate settlement it can still produce savings by clarifying or narrowing the scope of the dispute.
- 2) Flexibility -ADR offers greater procedural flexibility than litigation. Litigation focuses exclusively on the parties, legal right and responsibilities, while ADR can address legal obligation, it can also take into account a wide variety of non-legal interest and concern such as an interest in preserving a relationship, in having feelings acknowledged or in preventing similar disputes in future. One of the ways ADR can do, this is by uncovering an addressing feelings such as anger, hurt which may be fueling the dispute.
- 3) Stress reduction and increased satisfaction- litigation can be highly stressful for the parties' lack of control over the process or the outcome. Prolonged uncertainty and mounting costs, I contribute to his. Disputant who have use ADR processes such as Mediation are generally satisfied with both the process and the results are more likely to abide by the team of the resolution because they participated in the formulating them.

**BEFORE YOU SUE
TRY SETTLEMENT**