

September 2026

DRCMediators@nccourts.org
919-890-1415

SEPTEMBER UPDATES & IMPORTANT REMINDERS!

RENEWAL APPLICATIONS due by SEPTEMBER 30!

Please download the DRC Renewal Application FY 26-27 AOC-DRC-24 Form and complete, date and sign.

Submit Renewal Application. Log in to File & Serve to submit your completed annual renewal application (as a saved and completed pdf). Please follow the step-by-step guide available on the DRC's Mediator Certification Renewal webpage. For instructions how to set up a File & Serve Account, please see the "How-to Guides" available on the DRC's Mediator Certification Renewal webpage. Once you have successfully filed your renewal application, you will receive an envelope number as confirmation of filing.

Pay via PayIt. You must pay your annual renewal fees after you complete your renewal application through the NCDRC Payment link for PayIt. Please see the Guide to Assist NCDRC Payments. Please note, your renewal fees do not auto-populate into PayIt – you must manually enter the amount due. Please see the DRC Fee Schedule if you are not clear about the amount due. ($200 for single MSC or FFS, $400 for both, ½ dues for inactive mediators.)

If you need help, please just email at DRCMediators@nccourts.org or give us a call, (919) 890-1415

Episode 6 of our Podcast, Beyond Neutrality is ALL About Renewals! Check it out if you need one more hour of CME!

BEYOND NEUTRALITY

CONFLICT RESOLUTION DAY

Thursday, October 15, 2026
Live Webcast 8:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

REGISTER HERE

The link will be sent to your email address on Wednesday the day before the program, register early!

POSTED FOR COMMENT UNTIL OCTOBER 1, 2026

Advisory Opinion 48

The Mediated Settlement Conference May Be Held Prior to the Completion of Discovery, Rule 3(b) The mediated settlement conference focuses the parties' attention on settlement rather than on trial preparation. The completion of discovery is not required for the parties to attend a court-ordered mediated settlement conference.

The Commission's Corner

At the Commission Meeting held August 14, 2026 the following items were fully approved and updated:

DRC Inactive Status Policy
DRC Policy on Lapsed Status and Reinstatement
Policy for Evaluating Dated and Out-of-State Training
DRC Guidelines for Interpreting MSC Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(3)
MSC Prerequisite 6-Hour Course Confirmation Form
District Criminal Court (DCC) Program Trainer Guidelines for NC Law Schools

Updates to the following Rules, including the Commission's vote regarding court-appointed fee increases, will be sent to the North Carolina Supreme Court for final review and approval, **expect updates in 2027:**

*DRC Rule 9 and DRC Rule 10 (Pre-Certification Assessment)
*DRC Rule 2(d)(1) in MSC/FFS and Clerk Programs
*MSC Rule 4
*FFS Rule 8



Our sincere appreciation goes out to the following Commissioners and for their dedication and hard work as their terms of service come to an end:

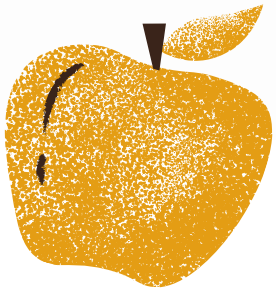
DA Andrew Murray, Zachary Bolen, Judge Robin Stinson and Justina Tate

THANK YOU!

IMPORTANT: DRC Staff would like to remind all mediators to be aware of any fraudulent or scam solitiations or inquiries! If you think you have encountered a situation like this please contact us immediately at (919) 890-1415

The DRC Staff appreciate all that you do, and we know you work so very hard, so feel free to take a break and enjoy a witty poem by Jennifer Suchanec and print this fun Word Search crafted by Brenda Spence!





LET'S MEDIATE!

L	G	R	I	E	V	A	N	C	E	L	S	U	C	U	A	C	X	Y
A	N	G	Q	V	D	E	I	F	I	T	R	E	C	W	J	K	F	D
W	B	V	H	L	Q	N	K	L	E	V	E	R	A	G	E	I	H	E
Y	J	D	T	O	J	S	E	Z	L	A	R	T	U	E	N	M	D	M
E	A	I	U	S	X	E	B	T	A	G	I	B	H	U	J	P	I	E
R	K	S	R	E	R	I	P	U	S	U	V	T	E	C	T	A	S	R
Y	H	P	T	R	D	T	M	E	D	I	A	T	O	R	E	S	C	J
L	E	U	J	L	E	R	S	D	V	D	L	G	Z	A	C	S	U	T
A	L	T	M	V	A	A	K	T	E	A	R	S	G	W	I	E	S	C
I	T	E	M	O	L	P	S	N	U	N	S	R	B	E	V	M	S	I
T	T	B	D	Y	R	P	E	C	K	C	E	D	E	F	R	U	I	L
R	E	C	O	N	C	I	L	E	T	E	I	V	R	L	E	O	O	F
A	S	I	Y	X	W	R	U	M	D	E	M	A	N	D	S	W	N	N
P	J	V	E	L	U	A	R	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	S	E	R	O
M	R	I	F	N	K	P	R	C	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	M	O	C
I	U	L	E	U	G	R	A	E	E	R	G	A	S	I	D	B	X	T

O	AGREE	O	ARGUE	O	CAUCUS
O	CERTIFIED	O	CIVIL	O	COMMISSION
O	CONFLICT	O	DEAL	O	DEMANDS
O	DISAGREE	O	DISCUSSION	O	DISPUTE
O	GRIEVANCE	O	GUIDANCE	O	HUMOR
O	IMPARTIAL	O	IMPASSE	O	LAWYER
O	LEVERAGE	O	LISTEN	O	MEDIATOR
O	NEUTRAL	O	PARTIES	O	RECONCILE
O	REMEDY	O	RESOLVE	O	RESOLUTION
O	RULES	O	SERVICE	O	SETTLE
O	TEARS	O	TRUTH	O	UNIFY

The Nut Not Taken

By Jennifer Reid Suchanec

As grasps my mind the weight of days
Cars to drive and bills to pay
My eye is taken one fine month
On fighting squirrels by a trunk
One large fella grabs a nut
Another rascal squeals, "Hey, stop!
"That nut you steal was from my hut!"
Back and Forth the Squabble goes
With seemingly no end to woes
When suddenly a third appears!
A furry one with gentle soul,
Who utters tones both soft and low,
"What issue have you with the nut?
I know not either one of you, but kin
Or friend, this fight won't do."
"It's mine!" They both declare in time.
The wise third bows and nods his head,
"Perhaps a compromise is met?"
The look in both the others' eyes
Are wild, hungry, full of spite.
"I want its cap to dress my home,"
To which the other one bemoans,
"The meat's my want to feed my peeps."
And so, the third one wisely speaks,
"A settlement is what you've reached.
A settlement which lets you go
Ahead with other joys and woes.
Friend or kin or neighbor folk
You found solution to your strife
Go forward now...enjoy your life!"



Email us at:
DRCMediators@nccourts.org

Follow us on X @nc_drc & LinkedIn!

Commission Staff:
Tara L. Kozlowski, Executive Director
Tara.L.Kozlowski@nccourts.org
Jennifer Suchanec, Administrative Secretary
Jennifer.R.Suchanec@nccourts.org
Brenda Spence, Secretary
Brenda.D.Spence@nccourts.org
Erica Chretien, Secretary
Erica.K.Chretien@nccourts.org