



Dispute Resolution Center

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For over 25 years, the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) has been the recognized leader in the East Metro area in providing low- and no-cost alternative dispute resolution processes – including mediation, facilitation, restorative processes – in the community and in court-annexed settings.

Mission

The Dispute Resolution Center promotes the constructive resolution of conflict through open communication and shared decision-making.

Programs

The oldest community-mediation program in Minnesota, DRC is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides volunteer-based mediation, facilitation, training, restorative justice, and referral services. DRC is the only provider of a full-range of free and low-cost and no-cost conflict-resolution services in the East Metro area of the Twin Cities. All residents, businesses, and organizations can access DRC services-- and over 3,000 individuals participated through mediation, facilitation, training, outreach and referrals in 2008. DRC offers convenient, effective, and affordable services at low- or no-cost to those who might otherwise not receive them. The client population reflects the diversity of the community and no one is refused service for inability to pay. DRC is the largest provider of mediation services to the working poor and economically disadvantaged: 26% of people served have incomes of less than \$20,000.

DRC saves the taxpayers thousands of dollars each year...

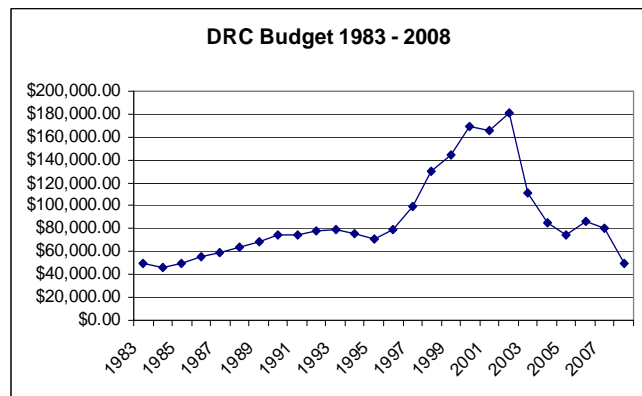
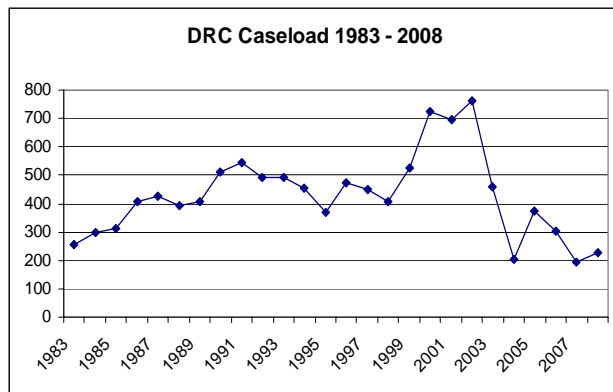
- in court-related costs: 90% of cases settled through mediation are adhered to by participants and 95% would use mediation again in the future
- in youth incarceration and court costs: youths who participate in restorative processes are 80% less likely to re-offend
- in police and emergency 911 calls: police nuisance calls referred to mediation save thousands of dollars each year

Issues Addressed

Through mediation, people can voluntarily resolve conflict in a manner that is respectful and satisfactory to all involved. Issues include: community and family issues such as neighborhood conflicts about noise, relationships, property lines, nuisance, vandalism and pets; landlord/tenant issues; small claims matters; business/consume and employment disputes; matters of public policy concerning land use and development, traffic, parking and construction; and family-related issues such as post-divorce visitation schedules, truancy, parent-child relationships, and co-parenting.

Staffing and Funding

A 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, DRC operates with a nine-member Board of Directors, a staff of .5 FTEs, and over 150 volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community. In 2008, DRC operated with a budget of less than \$50,000 -- and additional funding cuts are anticipated for 2009. The following graphs illustrate the correlation between funding and service provision: with increased funding, DRC is able to serve more people.



Funding Cuts

1. Elimination of the Ramsey County/Second Judicial Court contract as of 2003 due to the reductions in local government aid.
2. Elimination of state funding due to the budget shortfall: Restorative Justice funding from the Department of Corrections and Victim-Offender Mediation funding from Crime Victim Services.
3. Funding from the City of Saint Paul's Community Opportunities Partnership eliminated in 2004.
4. Most East Metro municipalities have reduced or eliminated funding.

Organizational Strengths and Values

The Dispute Resolution Center:

- **believes** people can resolve disputes respectfully, without litigation, to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.
- **advocates** for managing disputes peacefully through the use of problem-solving techniques that help build strong feelings of community among people having great individual differences.
- **provides** the highest quality services possible and ensures that these services are accessible to all residents of the communities we serve.
- **partners** with community members, groups, schools and businesses to develop and maintain an open organization that reflects diversity and welcomes all people.
- **promotes** the peaceful resolution of conflict as a preferred method of building healthy communities and reaching mutual goals.

Those Who've Used DRC Say...

"DRC should be available at every court session." Ramsey County Conciliation Court Disputant

"A weight has been lifted. Much better outcome than a restraining order." St. Paul Resident

"This system is much less time consuming and less stressful." Former litigant

Party 1: "I'm glad the service was available for myself/other parties – it's very beneficial"

Party 2: "I was not sure what to think before coming, but after being here, I think it's great and very glad I came." Ramsey County Housing Court Participant

"The mediators were calm & professional --and caring as well. Thanks so much for your help!

Very fair and responsive --and very accommodating to my schedule" Restorative Justice Participant

"I even asked the mediator who paid her salary and she said she was a volunteer. I would have thought she was worth it even if she had been paid. She did a marvelous job and I thank her and DRC."

Co-parent/Family case

For More Information

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