



United States Merit Systems Protection Board

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PRESS RELEASE – MEDIATION APPEALS PROGRAM

Chairman Neil A.G. McPhie announces the transfer of the administration of the Merit Systems Protection Board's Mediation Appeals Program (MAP) to Board Headquarters under the direction of Deborah Miron, Director, Office of Regional Operations. MAP offers the services of the Board's trained and certified mediators as an alternative to the MSPB formal appeal processes and procedures. Mediators facilitate a discussion between the parties to help them identify issues and barriers to agreement that will aid in resolving their disputes and settling the appeal quickly, economically, and to the benefit of all concerned. MAP is free, easy, and confidential. Both parties must agree to its use before the appeal will be accepted for the MAP process, and both must agree on its resolution before any settlement is concluded. Unlike the traditional appeal process, the parties control the result of the case under the skilled guidance of the Mediator, who will play no role in deciding the appeal should accord not be reached.

MAP was initially launched as a pilot project in two of the Board's regional offices in 2002, and because of early accomplishments, was expanded nationwide in 2005. The active leadership of Chief Administrative Judge Thomas Lanphear, Director of the Board's Atlanta Regional Office, built MAP into the popular and successful program that it has become. Among MAP's successes, a greater number of cases have been mediated each year since the program's inception, and of more than 100 appeals, approximately 50% of those in mediation settled at the conclusion of the MAP process. In fact, the advantages of MAP do not stop at the termination of mediation because experience shows that a large number of appeals that are not resolved by the mediation itself settle when they are returned to the traditional adjudication track. When such cases are considered, MAP enjoys a settlement rate of approximately 60%.

Moreover, based on the evaluations the parties are asked to complete at the end of each mediation, more than 95% of the participants have stated that they would use MAP again.

Chairman McPhie is bringing direction of MAP to Headquarters to demonstrate the Board's commitment to its success and to provide it with greater prominence and emphasis. Among the duties that will be transferred are the appointment and certification of new mediators, approval of training for all mediators, written and telephonic inquiries, assignment and monitoring of cases, budget, data maintenance, and reports tracking. Parties who have appeals that are or will be pending in any of the Board's regional offices and are interested in participating in a MAP mediation should contact the assigned administrative judge. For further information on MAP, contact Deborah Miron, MAP Coordinator [OR: Cynthia Boston, Regional Operations MAP Coordinator], 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20419, phone number (202) 653-6772.

The Board is an independent, non-partisan quasi-adjudicatory agency with responsibility for deciding Federal employee appeals from management action taken against them and for protecting the integrity of the civil service and other Federal merit systems. The Board also conducts studies of the civil service and other merit systems in the Executive Branch.