How do I find out about MAP?

Contact the MSPB's MAP Regional Operations Coordinator or the Administrative Judge in the region where the appeal is filed.

U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
Mediation Appeal Program (MAP)

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U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board

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Mediation Appeals Program (MAP)

A "no-lose" alternative to formal MSPB adjudication—a quick and confidential way to resolve MSPB appeals in an informal setting, facilitated by a highly-skilled independent mediator.

What is MAP?

- The Mediation Appeals Program (MAP) is a widely available alternative for resolving MSPB appeals.
- MAP is a voluntary confidential process in which the parties elect to mutually participate at any time prior to full adjudication of the appeal, although the best results tend to occur with early entry into the program.
- MAP is an interactive process conducted in an informal setting, facilitated by an MSPB Mediator.
- MAP is a process whereby, at the least, parties discuss important issues and learn more about the various dynamics underlying their dispute, and at best, achieve a resolution of the appeal.
- MAP is a process that frequently results in settlement of the appeal. When that does not occur, however, the case is promptly returned to the Administrative Judge for adjudication.

What is the difference between adjudication of an MSPB appeal and mediation of an MSPB appeal?

Adjudication:

- The Administrative Judge determines the outcome of the appeal based on the law and facts as he or she views them.
- Adjudication is adversarial.
- The Administrative Judge retains control over the process.
- Adjudication is a formal process, which often includes a public hearing during which witnesses testify.
- Adjudication can take months, or if a petition for review is filed, far longer.

Mediation:

- With the mediator as facilitator, the parties explore relevant facts and issues and consider their interests and positions, as well as their emotions, relationships, and goals.
- The parties communicate directly with each other in an informal setting where confidentiality is preserved.
- The parties mutually set the rules, retain ultimate control over the process, and determine the resolution.
- The mediator's responsibility is to the process, not the outcome.
- The process can be more cost-effective, offering lower risks for both sides.
- Resolution of complex issues can often be achieved in less than a day.
- Settlement may involve terms that the Board would not have authority to order, were the appeal to be formally adjudicated.
- If the case does not settle during mediation, the parties frequently resume formal adjudication of the appeal with a clearer understanding of the issues, which may facilitate a later settlement.

Who are the Mediators?

- MAP Mediators are trained MSPB professionals from all sections of the agency.
- MAP Mediators are certified and have received regular formal and informal training in dispute resolution techniques with an emphasis on the resolution of federal employee appeals.
- Mediators will have no input into the appeal if it does not settle and will not discuss what happens in the mediation with anyone involved in the adjudication of the appeal.
- MAP Mediators facilitate a voluntary discussion of the parties' interests and positions only to the extent requested by the parties.

How does MAP work?

- Parties consult with the MAP Regional Operations Coordinator and/or Administrative Judge.
- Parties mutually agree to mediate without delay and sign the Agreement to Mediate.
- The case is referred to the Regional Operations Coordinator for assignment of a Map Mediator.
- The Mediator confers with the parties, usually by telephone, regarding scheduling and other preliminary matters.
- The parties generally meet and mediation takes place at a mutually agreeable location, although it may be done by phone or video conference if circumstances warrant.
- During the mediation, the MAP Mediator assists the parties with defining their positions and interests, and with discussing settlement terms.
- The mediation terminates and the MAP Mediator refers the case back to the Administrative Judge as a settled appeal, or to resume adjudication of the appeal if there is no settlement.
- We seek your opinion on how well MAP serves your needs, as we continue to strive to improve the program.

Why choose MAP?

- MAP is a fast and informal alternative for resolving your appeal that allows the parties to control the outcome.
- Parties who have used it overwhelmingly said they would use MAP again.