

MARYLAND

RULE 607. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1. Authorization of ADR

The Court authorizes the use of all alternative dispute resolution processes in civil actions, including adversary proceedings in bankruptcy. The Magistrate Judges of the Court shall constitute the panel of neutrals made available by the Court for use by the parties. The provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 455 shall govern the disqualification of a Magistrate Judge from serving as a neutral. The parties may agree to the use of a neutral other than a Magistrate Judge.

2. Consideration of ADR

Litigants in all civil cases shall consider using the ADR process provided by the Court at an appropriate stage in the litigation.

3. Attendance at ADR Proceedings

Trial counsel for each party, as well as a party representative having full settlement authority, shall attend each settlement conference held by the Court. If insurance coverage may be applicable, a representative of the insurer, having full settlement authority, shall attend.

4. Confidentiality

The Court's ADR process is confidential. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties and the Court, no disclosure shall be made to anyone, including the judicial officer to whom the case is assigned, of any dispute resolution communication that in any respect reveals the dispute resolution positions of the parties or advice or opinions of neutrals. No such communication shall be admissible in any subsequent proceeding except as permitted by the Federal Rules of Evidence.

5. Arbitration

Actions may be referred to arbitration only in accordance with the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 654. Consent to arbitration must be freely and knowingly given. No party or attorney shall be prejudiced in any way for refusing to participate in arbitration.