



ANNOUNCEMENT

The United States District Court for the unofficial southern division of the District invites members of the Nevada Bar to apply for a position on the Inmate Early Mediation Panel. Attorneys appointed to serve as *pro bono* mediators will preside over mediations with inmate plaintiffs who sue the Nevada Department of Corrections for constitutional violations of their confinement pursuant to Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

1. What is the Inmate Early Mediation Program?

Prisoner litigation comprises 27% of the District of Nevada's caseload. The Inmate Early Mediation Program was created in 2009 to assist the court in the management of Section 1983 inmate cases, which account for a significant percentage of the District Court's civil caseload. The program has been successful in resolving thirty-seven percent of the cases referred to mediation, and early resolution has reduced the significant court time required to decide dispositive and non-dispositive motions in these cases. As a result, the court is better able to manage its remaining caseload, which continues to increase.

2. Who should apply?

Lawyers who are selected to serve on the mediation panel will preside over mediations between the *pro se* inmate, the Nevada Department of Corrections representative, and the deputy attorney general. No prior mediation experience is required, and serving on the panel is an excellent way to become familiar with federal court procedures in civil cases. Both new and experienced lawyers are encouraged to apply.

3. Why should you apply?

In Nevada, lawyers are asked to aspire to provide twenty hours of *pro bono* legal services to those unable to pay, and this panel is an excellent way to serve the public. Lawyers who have served on the panel report that the experience has greatly enhanced their own understanding of mediation and the work of the federal court. In addition, they find it rewarding to assist the parties in arriving at a settlement and in achieving a better understanding of their case.

4. Will there be training?

The court will offer training in mediation and in Section 1983 law at a series of programs. New mediators are required to attend all training sessions. Mediators will also tour a prison and observe at least two inmate mediations to become familiar with the process.

5. What is the time commitment?

When a case is referred to mediation, the court contacts the mediation panel via email, and the first mediator to volunteer is selected for that mediation. This voluntary system has worked very well and allows attorneys to sign up for a mediation when their calendars allow. Mediators are asked to commit to one year of service, but many members of the mediation panel have asked to remain because they find the work challenging and rewarding.

6. How long does a typical mediation last? When and where are they held?

Mediations are scheduled on Fridays at 9 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. They typically last two to three hours. They are held at the courthouse, and the inmate appears via video conference. The NDOC representative and deputy attorney general are present. Mediators are provided confidential mediation statements and are able to review the inmate complaint, and the defendants' answer.

7. How do I apply to become a mediator?

Those interested in applying should send a letter of interest and resume to Judge Foley's law clerk, Allison Reese at allison_reese@nvd.uscourts.gov. You may also contact chambers at 464-5575 and Judge Foley would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

8. What is the application deadline?

The deadline to apply is **Monday, October 31, 2016**.