



SOUTHEASTERN
DISPUTE RESOLUTION
SERVICES

2022
ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 10, 2023



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PART 1:

WHO WE ARE

**Your first contact when you need positive communication,
peaceful resolutions, improved relationships.**

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

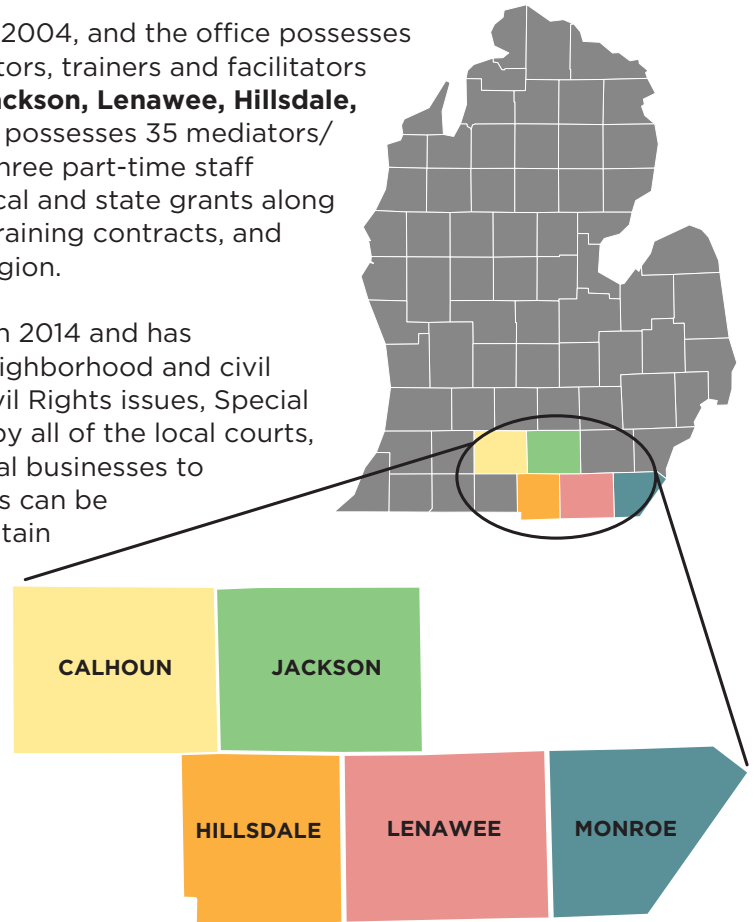


Southeastern Dispute Resolution Services was originally created in 1994 as Michigan court system's Community Dispute Resolution Program began to expand. As the CDRP grew to 26 community mediation centers around the state, the original service plan was to provide outreach and training to interested individuals within each county to help solve conflict where they reside.

The current leadership team as been in place since 2004, and the office possesses a dedicated, professional and skills stable of mediators, trainers and facilitators who are available throughout the service region: **Jackson, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Monroe,** and, as of 2021, **Calhoun Counties.** SEDRS possesses 35 mediators/facilitators, seven trainers, two full-time staff, and three part-time staff persons. The office is funded through a series of local and state grants along with a diverse series of fee for services contracts, training contracts, and fee for services provided throughout the service region.

The office became a stand alone non-profit entity in 2014 and has continued to blossom. Services grew from basic neighborhood and civil court disputes to complex probate court issues, Civil Rights issues, Special Education issues, and more. SEDRS is called upon by all of the local courts, many local attorneys, local school districts, and local businesses to help solve conflicts and provide training so conflicts can be prevented. The volunteers and staff of SEDRS maintain a high level of training and professionalism to keep up with not only the demand and growth of the office, but also with the sophistication of the parties the office deals with. SEDRS is quickly becoming a leader in conflict and dispute management for Southeast Michigan.

SEDRS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.



Personnel

STAFF

Marc Stanley, JD, MPP
Executive Director

Christy Johnson
Executive Administrator

Tiffany Stanley, LLM, PHR
Operations Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ben Rock *Co-chair*
Mallory Martin *Co-chair*
Hannah Ball
Thomas Burke
Dr. Maria Cudowska
Laurie Sexton
Karen Sun

3 full-time employees



7 board members



5 contracted workers

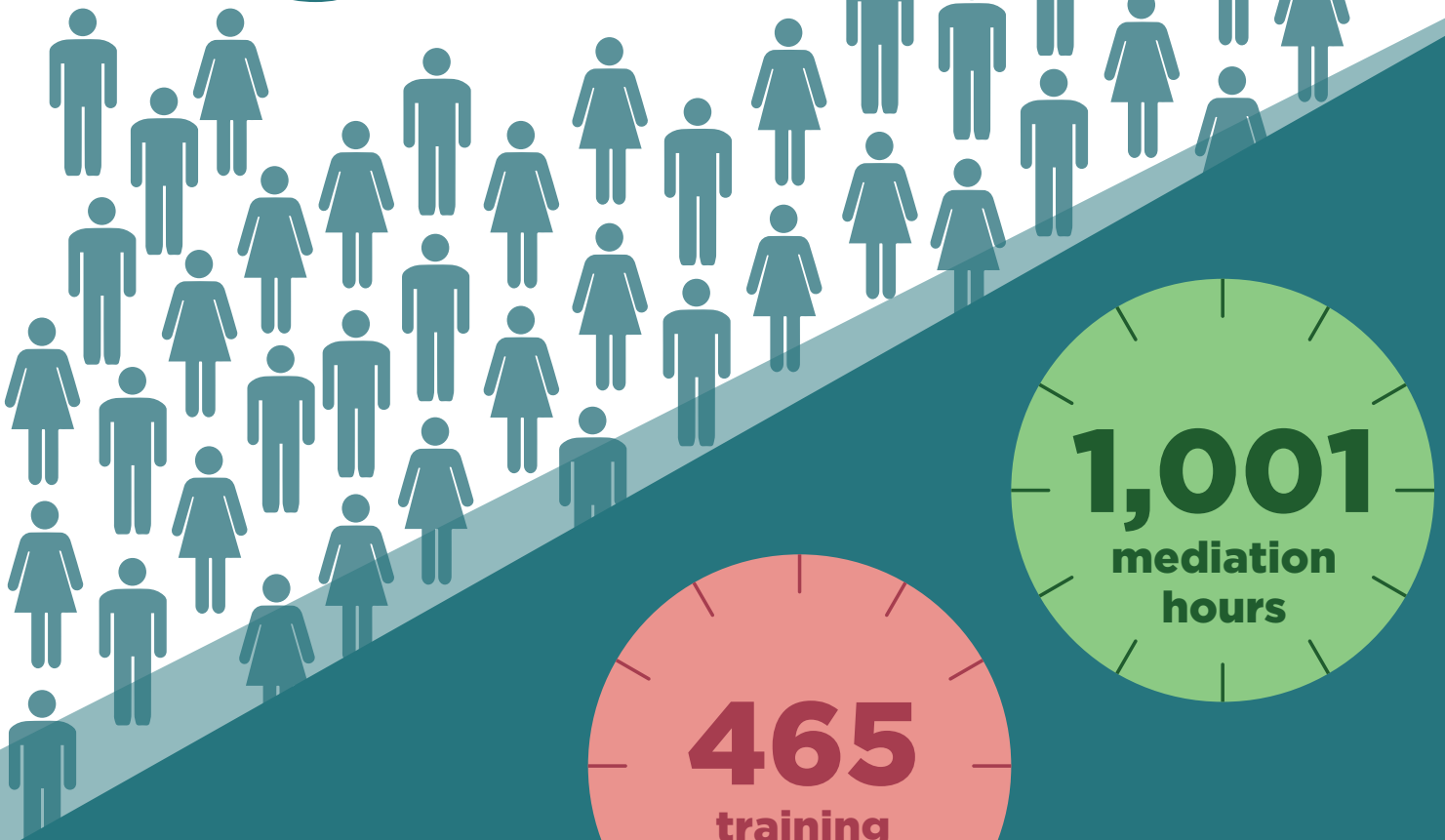
OUR MEDIATORS



In 2022, SEDRS worked with 49 volunteer mediators for a total of 1,001 mediation hours. Additionally, our volunteers were involved in over 465 hours of additional training, including advanced trainings and working with update training, as well as 248 hours in additional events.

49

volunteer
mediators



Value of in-kind
volunteer time donated:

\$181,190





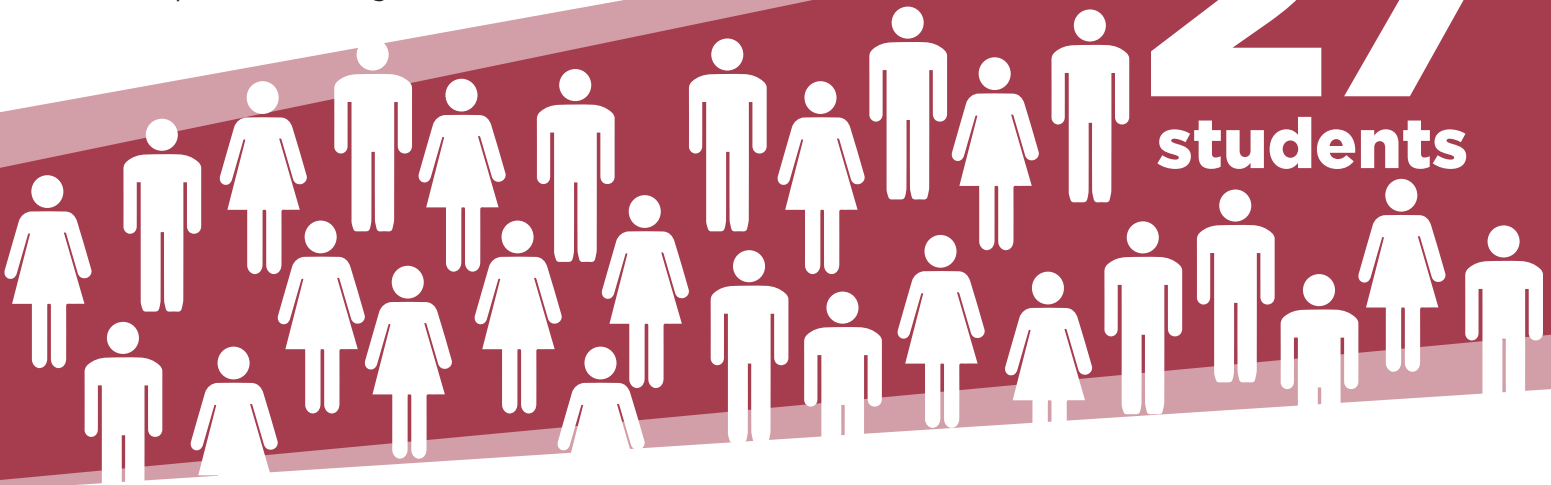
SEDRS Externship program became a strength of the Organization during the pandemic. SEDRS continued to present and recruit students from MSU College of Law and Toledo Law School while also adding University of Detroit Mercy to the growing number of institutions that students choose the agency as an externship destination. During the pandemic, SEDRS hosted 21 students through a formal Externship process or a more informal internship process as well as hosting undergraduate students from Alma College as well.

The Professional Development process was enhanced by Operations Manager Tiffany Stanley. With her background in human resources and professional development, Ms. Stanley standardized and created a model onboarding process used for all students and volunteers. The students must all become certified mediators and complete a laborious five-week onboarding process in which they learn SEDRS programming, communication process, mediation process and internal paperwork processes. The students are assigned to a mentor mediator and observe and co-mediate with that mentor for several weeks. The students also must attend weekly debriefing sessions so they can discuss cases, observations, new scenarios, problems and mediation techniques.

SEDRS also implemented a weekly professional development speakers bureau, where ADR, legal, judicial, academic and peace keeping professionals from around the world come to share with our volunteer and students. SEDRS works to create a strong foundation in problem solving, as well as exposing the students and volunteers to other experts in the field of ADR and problem solving.

In 2023, SEDRS already has 15 students signed up to participate with the externship process.

27
students



SEDRS Externship Students

University of Detroit Mercy Law

Emily Artzberger
Alexandra ReHill
Margaret Pettipas
Tenisha Warford
Summer Simon
Peter Baklarian
Allison Norton

Brittany Crego
Rita Dunne
Shanice Hawgood
Brittani Liggins
Alan Meka
Aidan Traynor
Merissa Arsula

Michigan State College of Law

Bryan Ring
Victoria Hansen
Anna Henson
Tori Orent

Morgan Henry
Kristina Pederson
Lexi Andrews

DePaul Law School

Matthew Fern

Toledo Law School

Stephen Pietron
Jake Guigar
Sarah Knepp
Alexis Spencer
Samantha Knapp



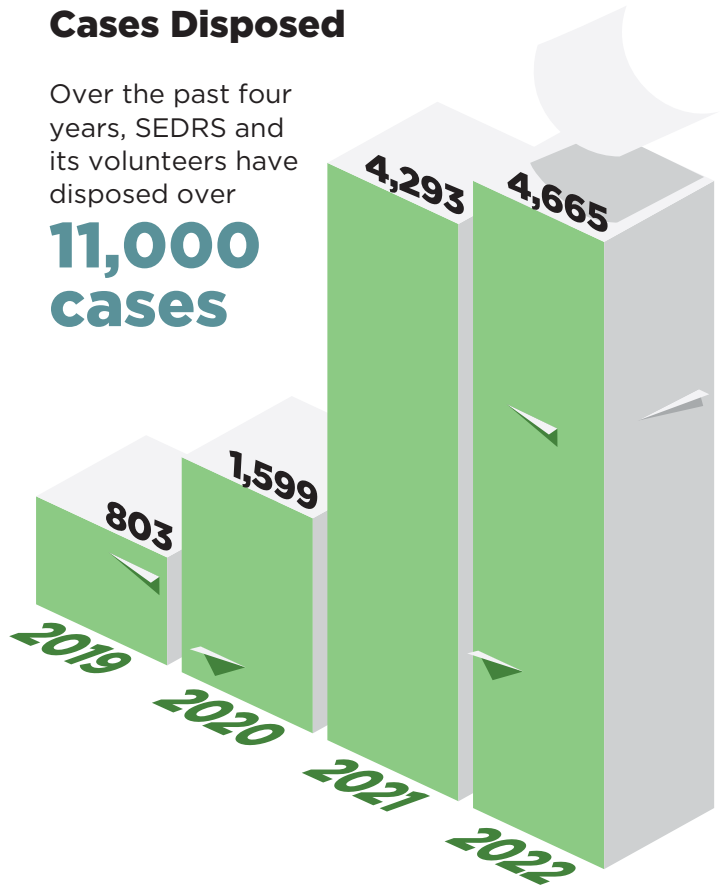
8,650 INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN 2022



Cases Disposed

Over the past four years, SEDRS and its volunteers have disposed over

11,000 cases



2022 settlements value:

\$2,064,933

2021 settlements value:

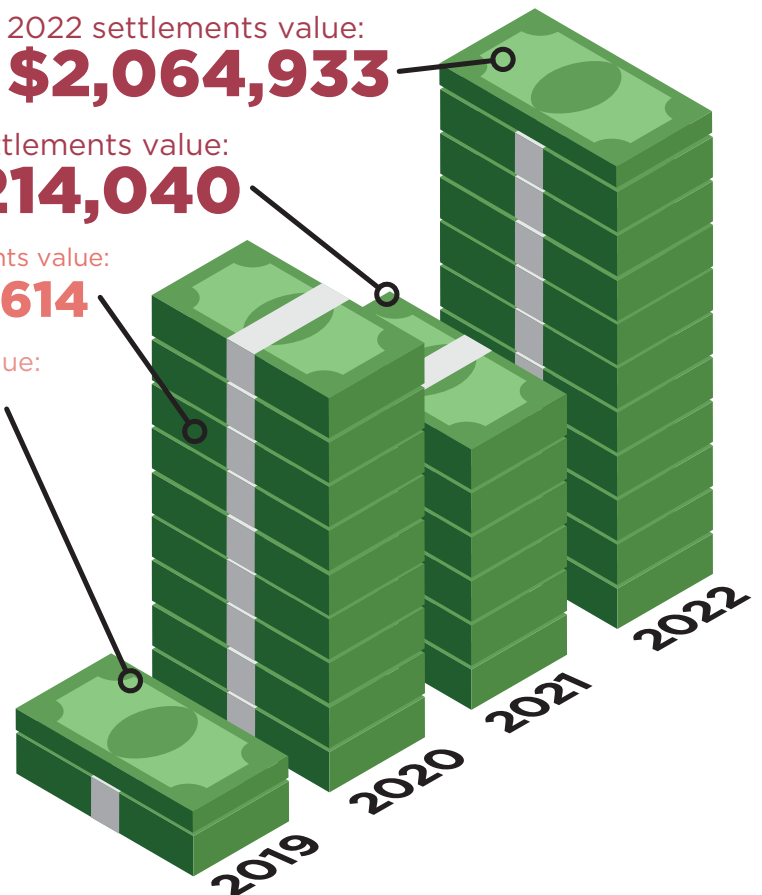
\$1,214,040

2020 settlements value:

\$1,900,614

2019 settlements value:

\$425,456



Negotiated Settlements

Since 2012, SEDRS and its volunteers have negotiated almost

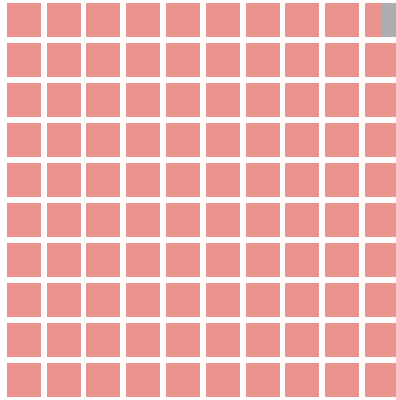
\$8.3 million

in agreements within the service region



Case Referral Sources

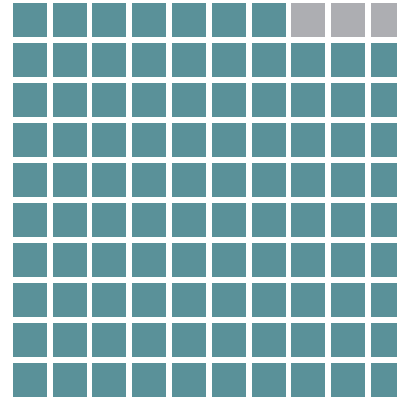
Cases from the court system have increased from 85% of referrals in 2019 to 99.5% in 2023, becoming SEDRS's primary referral source.



99.5% COURT REFERRALS

Case Types

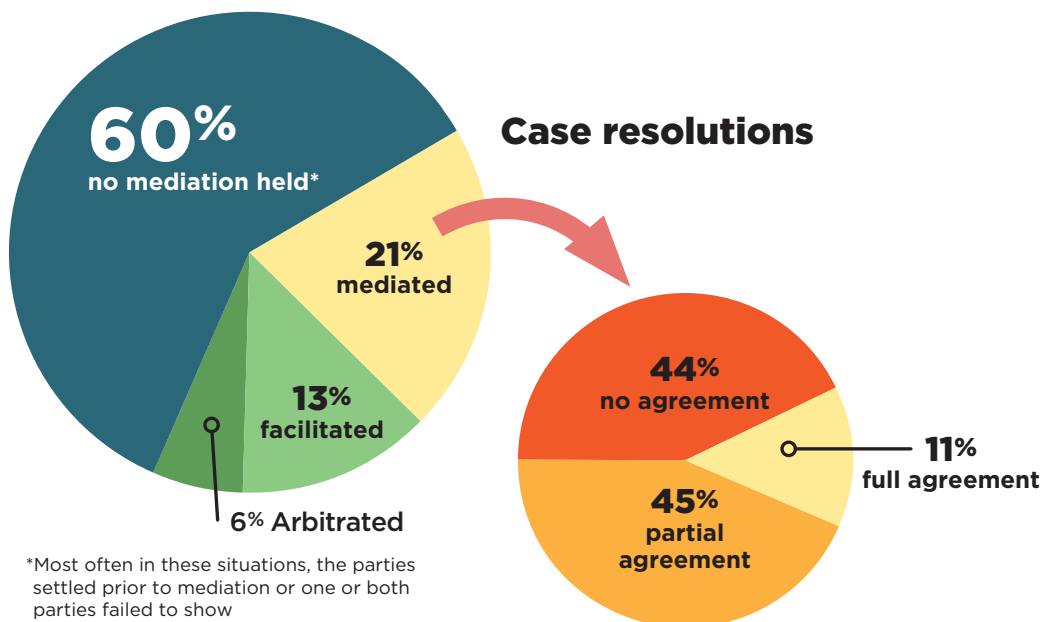
SEDRS's landlord/tenant cases have **increased 914%** over the past four years due to court backlogs and new virtual pre-trial hearings.



97% LANDLORD/TENANT DISPUTES

Cases, by county

Over the past four years, SEDRS has seen its case load **increase by 581%**, almost all of from Monroe and Jackson counties.



Hillsdale: 6.1%
Lenawee: 1.4%
Calhoun: 0.2%

PROGRAM PARTNERS



SEDRS works with a wide array of partner organizations throughout southeastern Michigan to provide services and educational training.

Statewide

MI State Bar Alternative Dispute Resolution Section
National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM)
Michigan Community Mediation Association (MCMA)
Princeton University
Michigan State College of Law
University of Detroit Mercy Law School
Toledo Law School
North Dakota Law School

Calhoun County

10th District Court
37th Judicial Circuit Court
Calhoun Probate Court
Calhoun County Housing Authority
Calhoun County Department of Health
and Human Services
Calhoun County Adult Protective Services
Calhoun Intermediate School District
Calhoun Community Mental Health
Calhoun County Seniors Program
Calhoun County Elder Care Professionals
Community Mental Health
Region 3 AAA

Hillsdale County

1st Judicial Circuit Court
2nd District Court
Hillsdale County Probate Court
Hillsdale County Department of Health
and Human Services
Hillsdale County Adult Protective Services
Hillsdale Intermediate School District
Reading Schools
Hillsdale Community Schools
North Adams Schools
Community Action Agency
Legal Services of South Central Michigan
Lifeways
Region 2 AAA
Special Education Mediation Services

Jackson County

Jackson 12th District Court
Jackson 4th Circuit Court
Jackson County Department of
Health and Human Services
Jackson County Adult Protective Services
Jackson Housing Commission
Jackson Library
Jackson Prison
Cascades Elementary
Columbia Schools
Da Vinci Institute
Jackson County Intermediate School District
Jackson High School
Jackson Public Schools
Advocates and Leaders for
Police and Community Trust
Behavioral Health Action Team

Community Action Agency
Great Start Collaborative
Head Start
Jackson Community Collaborative
Jackson County Guardianship Planning committee
Legal Services of South Central Michigan
Lifeways
Michigan Justice Partnership for Jackson
Region 2 AAA
Region 2 Area Agency on Aging
School Justice Partnership
Special Education Mediation Services (SEMS)
Social Emotional Learning
State Board for Infant Mental Health
Youth Net
Whole Child Collaborative



Lenawee County

2A District Court
39th Circuit Court
Lenawee Probate Court
Lenawee Probation Office
Lenawee Prosecutors Office
Lenawee Public Defender
Lenawee County Department of Health
and Human Services
Lenawee County Adult Protective Services
Lenawee County Child Protective Services
Adrian Public Schools
Blissfield Community Schools
Morenci Public Schools

Madison Community Schools
Lenawee Intermediate School District
Cradle to Career
Guardian Ad Litem
Lenawee Community Mental Health
Lenawee Housing Help
Legal Services of South Central Michigan
Lifeways
Student Justice Partnership
Special Education Mediation Services
(SEMS) • Youth Campus
Region 2 AAA

Monroe County

1st District Court
Monroe Probate Court
Monroe Prosecutor's Office
Monroe County Department of Health and Human Services
Monroe County Adult Protective Services
Monroe County Child Protective Services
Airport Community Schools
Bedford Public Schools
Ida Public Schools
Monroe Public Schools
Monroe Intermediate School District
Legal Services of South Central Michigan
Lifeways
Monroe Community Mental Health
Monroe Community Opportunity Program
Monroe County United Way
Monroe County Guardian
Monroe County Youth Center
Region 2 AAA
Special Education Mediation Services (SEMS)
Student Justice Partnership



PART 2:

WHAT WE DO: MEDIATION

WHAT IS MEDIATION?



Mediation is a process in which two or more people involved in a dispute meet in a confidential setting, and with the guidance of professionally trained mediators, attempt to work out a mutually-agreeable solution to their problem. Mediation allows all parties involved to explain their view of the situation in a non-threatening, neutral environment. Mediators have no decision-making authority, and they do not render case evaluations. Instead, they are trained to assist the parties themselves in achieving resolution.

Each year, over 10,000 Michigan citizens who might otherwise bring a dispute before a judge or magistrate will resolve their disputes through mediation services supported by the Community Dispute Resolution Program (CDRP).

Mediation is effective across a broad array of dispute types, including merchant/consumer, landlord/tenant, professional/client, and neighborhood disputes. Increasingly, parties are turning to CDRP centers for the resolution of more complex matters, including complaints arising under the Americans with Disabilities Act, contested adult guardianship matters, juveniles petitioned into probate court, EEOC complaints, and disputes between farmers and federal agencies. Several courts and centers are exploring mediating issues that citizens are attempting to resolve by obtaining a personal protection order.

SEDRS is guided by the principles of Positive Communication, Peaceful Resolutions, and Improved Relationships



OUR PROGRAMS



SEDRS offers a number of mediation and facilitation services across our service areas. These can include general mediation as well as more specialized programs such as:

- **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INDEPENDENT FACILITATION**

In BHIF, an impartial, third-party mediator works in collaboration with an individual receiving behavioral health services to help guide their care planning process.
- **EVICTON DIVERSION PROGRAM**

Eviction Diversion Programs work with landlords and tenants to create negotiated conditional dismissals to court cases.
- **PERMANENCY PLANNING**

Permanency Planning Mediation facilitates discussions related to appropriate short- and long-term placement and stability for minor children.
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION MEDIATION**

Special Education mediation and facilitation helps parties develop the best intervention plan or educational program for special needs students.
- **ELDER CARE MEDIATION**

Eldercare mediation engages older adults, their families, and caregivers in facilitated decision-making processes to resolve conflicts and make collaborative decisions that support the older adult's need for dignity and self-governance.
- **PEACE CIRCLES**

Peace Circles are a versatile, informal restorative practice that teach patience, respect, safety, and calm.
- **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

Restorative Conferencing is a structured process where a highly trained, neutral third party facilitates a meeting between an offender and (typically) a victim.
- **USDA AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM**

Since 1987, this free program has helped farmers get fast, confidential solutions without the need for litigation.
- **ON-SITE/COURT MEDIATION**

Mediation may be offered or ordered through the court system. Examples of cases that might use mediation include small claims, domestic, guardianship, and child protection disputes.



USDA Agricultural Mediation Program

In 2022, SEDRS began offering services in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Certified Mediation Program, which makes grants to state-designated entities that provide alternative dispute resolution through mediation to agricultural producers, their lenders and others directly affected by the actions of certain USDA agencies.

The grants are administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Cases that may be mediated include, but are not limited to, agricultural loans, whether made by USDA or commercial lenders, and disputes involving USDA actions on farm and conservation programs, wetland determinations, rural water loan programs, grazing on national forest system lands, pesticides, rural housing and business loans, and crop insurance.





PART 3:

WHAT WE DO: TRAINING



SEDRS offers dynamic, interactive training programs for mediators. More than just lecture, it offers participants the opportunity to study and experience new methods for achieving resolution. The training includes learning practical skills, employing immediate “hands-on” experience when applying the principles of successful mediation. SEDRS offers the following training programs:

New Training for 2022: Workplace Conflict Management/ Communication

In the summer of 2021, **Bridging Divides Imitative** (BDI), a non profit research group affiliated with **Princeton University**, contacted SEDRS. DMI specifically works on tracking and sharing tools to stem political violence and was looking for a partner to help develop de-escalation training tools to help communities in Michigan and the Midwest cope with conflict.

As part of SEDRS’s development process, the organization received permission from the **Southern Law Poverty Center** and the **Savannah Georgia Mediation** clinic to use the CLARA model as part of the foundation of these new de-escalation tools. CLARA stands for “Center, Listen, Affirm, Respond, and Add,” and has been used in anti-domestic terrorism trainings. SEDRS tailored the CLARA model into a potent de-escalation tool that can be tailored to fit any group who may deal with difficult personalities or disrupters, whether individuals or in a group.

As part of this partnership, BDI has added SEDRS to their national directory for de-escalation and bystander training.

Current Mediation Training Seminars

General Civil Mediation Training

Non-Verbal Communication Seminar

Elder Law Mediation Seminar

CPS/Permanency Planning Mediation Program

Condensed Peace Circle & Restorative Practices Overview

Peace Circle Facilitator Training

Basic Restorative Practices and Introduction to Circles

Restorative Justice Conferencing Seminar

Peace Circle Facilitator Train the Trainer

Peer to Peer Mediation Training

Behavioral Health Independent Facilitation Skills

Special Education Mediation/ Facilitation Informational Workshops & Navigation Seminars





PART 4: **HOW WE DO IT:** **FUNDING**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Southeastern Dispute Resolution Services is funded, in part, by the State Court Administrative Office. The Community Dispute Resolution Program was established in 1988 by Public Act 260. SEDRS started providing mediation services on its own in 2015. During that year, SEDRS has received funding from the State based on core cases from the previous year.

Income Source	2022	2021
MI State Court Administrative Office Grant	174,566	128,472
State Grants & Contracts	n/a	15,115
County Grants & Contracts	3,150	18,950
Fees for Services	29,732	3,301
Eviction Diversion Program	64,150	114,117
Behavioral Health Program	21,075	n/a
Legal Services	15,000	n/a
Training	3,000	1,000
Independent Facilitation Income	584	1,460
Donations & Misc. Revenue	223	n/a
TOTAL	\$311,480	\$282,415

Expenses	2022	2021
MI State Court Administrative Office Expenses	174,566	n/a
Payroll	48,180	144,169
Outside Contractors	63,441	97,012
Administrative	20,780	18,539
Training	150	2,268
Office space	n/a	4,176
TOTAL	\$307,117	\$266,164

DIFFERENCE	\$4,363	-\$7,218
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