



Washington’s Association of Dispute Resolution Centers

Resolving disputes.
Strengthening communities.

2023 Legislative Agenda: Maintain investment in conflict reduction, housing stability, and access to justice in Washington’s communities

Washington’s 21 Dispute Resolution Centers (DRCs) strengthen equity in dispute resolution through the provision of free or affordable community-based mediation and training statewide, including trauma-informed services supporting housing stability, family stability, and youth and community restorative practices. **Resolution Washington requests the Legislature maintain its investment in the wellbeing of communities statewide by equipping DRCs with:**

- **\$17.2M in general operating support for the 2023-25 biennium to support core dispute resolution services, training and statewide access to justice: \$7.1M in FY24 and \$10.1M in FY25**

Our communities face mounting economic, political, and social pressures. Demand for dispute resolution services continues to rise. Yet DRCs with proven capability to resolve conflict are still significantly underfunded, with insufficient operating support to be fully responsive to these increasing needs and when emergent crises arise.

This request replicates the FY23 funding level with a \$3M increase in FY25, bringing the total closer to funding the full statutory expectations in RCW 7.75 of DRCs as alternative pathways to justice. Stable, sufficient operating funding for DRCs ensures Washingtonians statewide have access to low- or no-cost dispute resolution services, empowering individual decision-making while reducing burdens on courts and other agencies. Stable core funding also ensures DRCs are ready to add special programs as needed to help the State meet critical needs, such as housing stability.

- **\$15M in program support for the 2023-25 biennium to maintain DRC eviction prevention and housing stability capacity: \$7.5M annually in FY24 and FY25**

Continued investment in DRC housing stability work supports eviction prevention and reduction of court dockets, while providing access to justice to all community members. We see both Eviction Resolution Pilot Program (ERPP) type early dispute resolution services, with refinements, and voluntary dispute resolution services having value in stabilizing housing as we move from crisis response to long-term, ongoing management of housing challenges. \$7.5M is a 3% adjustment over the State’s FY23 DRC ERPP program funding. *Additionally the Legislature should invest in affordable housing, rental assistance, and pre- and post-filing legal aid.*

Details: [Recommendations for ERPP and Housing Stability](#) & [2023-25 Resolution WA Core Funding Budget Request](#)

- **Prioritize equity and access to justice**

Resolution Washington and the DRCS are committed to championing policies, practices, and services that advance equity, dismantle poverty, address systemic racism, and support housing stability through our work, including developing and implementing equity-focused mediation training, and through the work of our partners who share these objectives.

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| <p>Washington’s Dispute Resolution Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 105,000+ people directly served in FY23 ● 13,000+ dispute resolution cases in FY23 ● 82% of clients say mediation improved their situation ● 73% ERPP cases resolved before going to court* | <p>The ERPP process and opportunity to mediate with our tenant saved us time and thousands of dollars in court costs. <i>-Property manager after mediation session</i></p> <p>I really appreciate the program that has helped me so much. I would have been on the streets if your program wasn’t available. I thank you all so so much!” <i>-Tenant after DRC ERPP services</i></p> |
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