



Office of Dispute Resolution Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2025

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Child and Youth Restorative Conferencing



Family and Vulnerable Adult Mediation

Overview

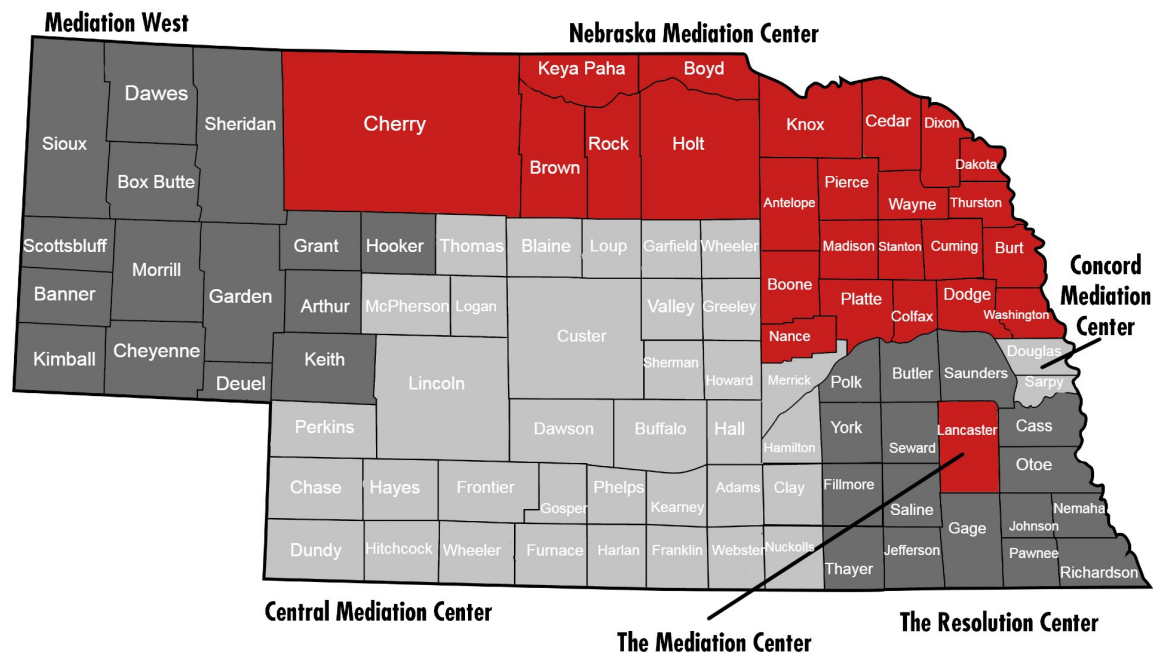
Nebraska is one of only a few states that offer mediation and restorative justice (RJ) facilitations statewide through non-profit mediation centers. These centers are reviewed annually for approval by the Nebraska Judicial Branch's Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation.

Mediation and RJ facilitations are available before filing a court case, during a court case, and after adjudication. Regardless of when mediation or RJ occurs, including before or during a court case, a citizen's right to the judicial process is never interfered with.

Parties can confidently proceed with mediation knowing that mediation communications are confidential. No admission, representation, or statement made in mediation, not otherwise discoverable or obtainable, shall be admissible as evidence or subject to discovery.¹ Communications that occur as part of an RJ facilitation are also confidential and privileged.²

¹ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 25-2914

² Neb. Rev. Stat. § 25-2914.01



Successes, Challenges, & Recommendations

This year saw the conclusion of a four-year youth restorative justice (RJ) grant program, the *Nebraska Juvenile Restorative Justice & Family Intervention Initiative*, funded through the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Between July 1, 2022, and September 30, 2025, the six mediation centers received 1,819 youth restorative justice referrals with 1,407 (77.4%) of those referrals participating in a restorative process. Referrals were for students in every grade from kindergarten to 12th grade. Of those receiving services, 97.44% developed a reparation plan (82.44%) or achieved another outcome such as an attendance plan (15%). An external evaluation found that recidivism, or future system involvement (FSI) was 15%. (The external evaluation report will be published after approval by OJJDP.)

A goal for this grant was an evaluation based on propensity score matching. However, that was not possible due to not having a comparable data set to match to. To achieve comprehensive and robust evaluations in the future, reciprocal data sharing across state agencies and counties is essential. This will take across the board collaboration with a shared goal of improved outcomes for our youth and their families, as well as cost savings for all involved.



FY 2025 Closed Case Statistics

Mediation Center Case Types	# of Cases	% of Caseload
Parenting Plans <i>Includes: Divorce, Modification, Never Married</i>	1674	41.9%
Specialized ADR <i>Includes: Divorce, Modification, Never Married</i>	421	10.5%
Family (Not Parenting Plans) <i>Includes: Divorce no children, Elder, Grandparent Visitation, Parent-Child</i>	115	2.9%
General/Community <i>Includes: Small Claims, Workplace, Special Education</i>	639	16.0%
Child Welfare <i>Includes: Family Group Conference, Pre-Hearing Conference, Pre-Hearing Permanency Review Conference, Pre-Hearing Termination of Parental Rights Conference</i>	516	12.9%
Juvenile Justice <i>Includes: Victim Youth Conference, Excessive Absenteeism/Truancy</i>	628	15.7%
Adult <i>Includes: Assault</i>	3	0.1%



Agreement Rates

Cases Mediated*	1935
Cases Facilitated*	451
Resolution Rate	73%



Referrals

Court	43%	Agency/Org	12%
Attorneys	22%	School	6%
Self/Friend	18%		

* Attempted mediation or facilitation



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This annual report of the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) contains aggregate caseload statistics extracted from the caseload management system used by the ODR and the approved mediation centers. Providing case statistics ensures transparency to the public and complies with statutory requirements (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 25-2920).

The Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report and previous reports are available at:
<https://nebraskajudicial.gov/administration/publications-reports>

For more information about ODR, visit:
<https://nebraskajudicial.gov/programs-services/mediation-restorative-justice>