

RULE 9019-1. Alternative Dispute Resolution and Settlement Conferences.

(a) **Generally.** The Court encourages the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) in any adversary proceeding or contested matter where the parties believe the contested issues may be resolved through ADR. The Court will discuss ADR with the parties during the case scheduling conference. *See* Mont. LBR 9014-1 for applying ADR to contested matters.

(b) **The Early Neutral Evaluation Process and Goals.** The provisions of the District Court Local Rules regarding Early Neutral Evaluation (“ENE”) shall apply in Bankruptcy Court, subject to modifications necessary to ensure a specialized panel and requirements appropriate to bankruptcy issues. Upon request and consent of all parties, an adversary proceeding or contested matter will be submitted to ENE and the deadline for completing the ENE process shall be set forth in the Case Scheduling Order. The Court, upon request, will coordinate the initiation of ENE in any adversary proceeding or contested matter.

Committee Comment:

The Bankruptcy Section of the State Bar of Montana has established an Alternate Dispute Resolution Panel. The names of individuals available to mediate disputes in the context of bankruptcy cases are maintained on the Bankruptcy Section’s Internet webpage.
