



# news

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## **Office of Dispute Resolution to allocate some services based on indigency rates**

DENVER, Colo. – In an effort to ensure the most efficient and effective use of limited resources, the state Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) will change the way it allocates funding for mediation and other dispute-resolution services for the state’s indigent population.

Effective July 1, 2010, ODR funding for low- or no-cost services for indigent parties will be allocated to each of Colorado’s 22 judicial districts in proportion to the percentage of residents who live below the poverty level. According to the most recent Census data, more than 540,000 Colorado residents meet the threshold criteria for poverty.

“We want to provide access to services across the state in an equitable manner,” said Deputy State Court Administrator Carol Haller. “Because our indigent funds are limited, tying each judicial district’s ODR allocation to its indigent population is the most sensible approach to take.”

Under a 2009 reorganization, ODR made several significant changes to enhance its ability to measure the effectiveness of its dispute-resolution programs. In addition to changing the allocation model, ODR is developing a central online database where contract mediators will enter demographic and outcome information for every case ODR handles.

“The online database will give us the capability to better measure the effectiveness of our services,” said ODR Project Manager Holly Panetta.

In addition to state-paid services, ODR provides mediation and other dispute-resolution services for parties at an affordable rate. ODR also provides services targeted to never-married parents utilizing the Federal Access & Visitation Grant.

For more information, visit [www.ColoradoODR.org](http://www.ColoradoODR.org) or contact Alicia Davis, ODR Acting Director, or Holly Panetta, ODR Project Manager, at 303-861-1111.