



This report is submitted in compliance with K.S.A. 5-506(b), which requires the director of dispute resolution to report annually on the implementation of the Kansas Dispute Resolution Act. The act establishes an approval process for individuals and programs that practice dispute resolution—defined as “a process by which the parties involved in a dispute voluntarily agree or are referred or ordered by a court to enter into discussion and negotiation with the assistance of a neutral person.” Common forms of dispute resolution used in Kansas include mediation, conciliation, and parenting coordination. The act also establishes the Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution, composed of individuals trained and knowledgeable in dispute resolution. This council advises the director of dispute resolution on the administration of the act and related topics.

In this report you will find information on the types of disputes handled by approved programs and individuals, suggestions for program development, statistics concerning numbers and resolutions of disputes, and other information relevant to achieving the goals of the Kansas Dispute Resolution Act.

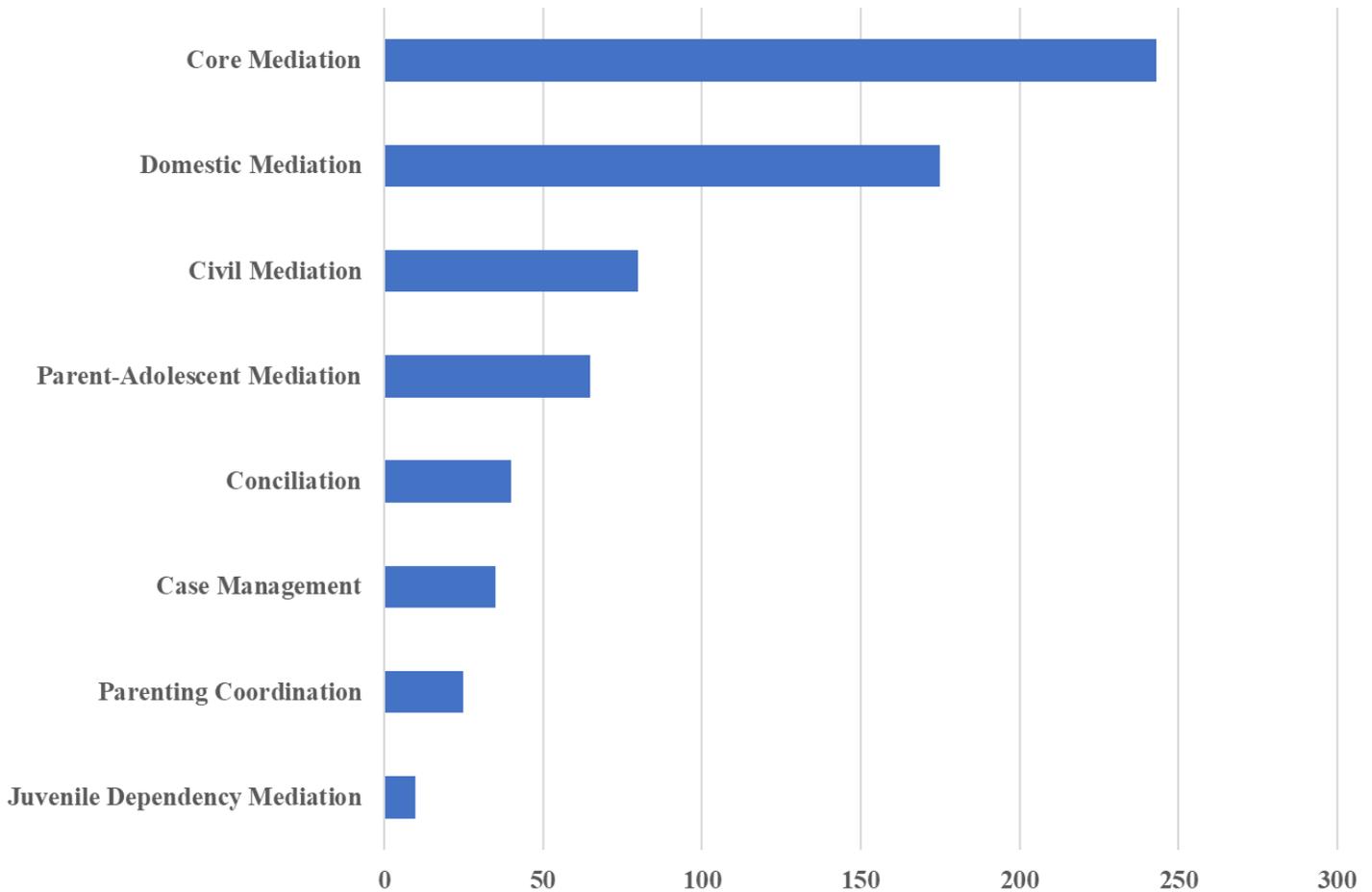
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*To promote, encourage, and facilitate alternative  
dispute resolution services which are accessible  
and affordable.*

~Advisory Council  
on Dispute Resolution  
mission statement

# 2021 Approved Providers by Category

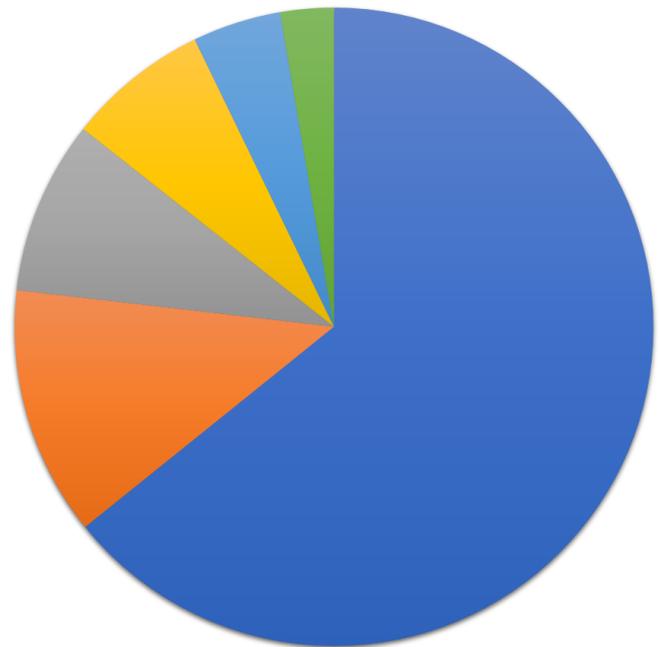


- **dispute resolution providers** 242
- **dispute resolution programs** 11
- **dispute resolution trainings** 69

# Three-Year Comparison of Dispute Resolution Subject Areas

	2019	2020	2021
agriculture	19	30	7
case management	151	0	3
church	21	22	24
civil rights	39	42	32
community	22	31	24
consumer	42	40	27
custody/parenting plan	2,594	1,547	2,711
domestic (full case)	290	143	334
domestic property	122	68	99
employment	260	353	326
environmental	8	5	9
family	67	46	77
group mediation	15	0	0
high conflict	0	0	0
juvenile dependency	14	13	3
limited action	23	21	9
malpractice	4	8	6
other	458	143	194
parent adolescent	86	78	21
personal injury	30	46	42
probate	33	41	27
public policy	0	4	6
small business	507	385	455
special education	19	16	12
victim/offender	124	265	88
workers compensation	19	4	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,967</b>	<b>3,351</b>	<b>4,545</b>

Six most active dispute resolution subject areas



- 1. custody/parenting plan (64%)**
- 2. small business (13%)**
- 3. employment (9%)**
- 4. domestic (full case) (7%)**
- 5. victim offender (4 %)**
- 6. domestic property (3%)**

Comparison chart at left: Dispute resolution totals in the three year comparison are taken from the annual renewal applications providers use to report the number of services provided.

# Program Feature: Johnson County Small Claims Mediation Program

Johnson County District Court participates in the Johnson County Small Claims Mediation Program, which has been very successful since its inception. The program offers small claims plaintiffs and defendants an alternative to litigation. Participation in the program may occur at the parties' request or through court referral. Approved dispute resolution providers mediate the issues, sometimes with the assistance of student mediators. If a small claims issue is not resolved through the mediation, parties are sent back to the court to present their case before the judge, often on the same day as the mediation.

Research has shown that mediated cases can result in a quicker resolution and higher compliance rates than traditional court proceedings. A 2021 survey about the Johnson County program revealed that 88% of respondents felt their mediator was fair to both parties, and 79% of the respondents reported their mediations resulted in an agreement with full compliance. The survey also found that most mediation participants spent an hour or less with the mediator, making it an efficient process for all involved. The majority of survey respondents indicated they would be willing to try mediation again.

The Johnson County program was originally designed for participants to work with the mediators in person, but with limitations on in-person gatherings during the pandemic, the program continued its invaluable service to the court by shifting to a virtual model. The 2021 survey found that more than 60% of individuals who participated in the online small claims mediation program were satisfied with the process. Due to its success, other districts across the state are working to establish similar programs in their courts.



# Advisory Council on Dispute Resolution 2021 Membership

Judge Keven O'Grady, chair

Lindsey Anderson

Micki Armstrong

Ronnie Beach

Dr. John Errante

Jenna Esquibel

Jennifer Foster

Randy Hersey

Judge Laura Lewis

Judge Kendra Lewison

Amanda Lovell

Dennis McHugh

Retired Judge Kevin Moriarty

Adina Morse

Marvin Motley

Janell Murphey

Dr. Tonya Ricklefs

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[kscourts.org/About-the-Courts/Programs/Dispute-Resolution](https://kscourts.org/About-the-Courts/Programs/Dispute-Resolution)