

# New York State Dispute Resolution Association

## 2021-2022

### Overview of Achievements

NYSDRA is the association of the statewide network of 20 Community Dispute Resolution Centers (CDRCs) throughout New York State. Under a service agreement, memorialized in a Memorandum of Understanding between NYSDRA and each CDRC, services are provided in all 62 counties in New York State. NYSDRA's programs, and by extension the services of the CDRCs, are available to all New Yorkers. These services are designed to provide the timely and satisfactory resolution to a wide range of conflicts. Such conflicts might otherwise be litigated, but as the costs and time required to pursue a court case is prohibitive to many low-income individuals, the services become vital in helping low-income New Yorkers access justice, often resulting in resolution of many contentious issues, that would otherwise have a negative impact on the social and financial circumstances of those individual accessing the services. NYSDRA's programs, therefore, provide resolution to problems facing New Yorkers in rural, suburban, and urban areas, and offer access and opportunity for resolution to conflict in a wide range of issues faced by many low-income New Yorkers in areas of family, youth, disability services, property, and community disputes. In many cases, parties resolve their disputes leading to improved relationships, improved communication, time, and financial savings.

From April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, NYSDRA's primary target population included New Yorkers in need of conflict resolution services, including mediation, and other services aimed at improving New Yorkers' access to justice and meeting the need for quality means of conflict management and resolution. This includes the range of programs and services managed by NYSDRA and provided by the Community Dispute Resolution Centers, including: Disability Mediation Programs (Early Intervention Mediation Program, Special Education Mediation, and ACCES-VR Mediation Program), the Community Mediation Service Corps Program (CMSC AmeriCorps), New York State Agricultural Mediation Program (NYSAMP), and the Lemon Law Arbitration Program.



**Population Served: Community Dispute Resolution Centers**

**Area Served: Statewide**

**Total IOLA Grant: \$110,210**

**Staffing Full Time Equivalents:**

- Total Staff: 3
- Other: 3

## Overview of Achievements

NYSDRA's disability mediation programs serve children and their families in need of early intervention and special education services as well as adults in need of vocational rehabilitation or training services. The Community Mediation Service Corps program mobilizes AmeriCorps members to serve their local communities in three service tracks; School Based Conflict Resolution Specialists, Youth Services Specialists, and Family and Custody Visitation Service Specialists. The target population for the CMSC program is schools, youth, and families facing custody and visitation disputes. The Lemon Law Arbitration Program serves all automobile, motorcycle, wheelchair, and mobile home consumers seeking redress from an automobile manufacturer for the purchase or lease of a "lemon" (i.e., bad vehicle).

The number of people that benefited from mediation and related services:

Case Type	Total Cases	Total Individuals Served*
Early Intervention	34	68
Special Education	305	610
Lemon Law	180	360
Americorps	616	1,713
ACCES-VR	5	10

\*The total number of individuals served is estimated for all case types other than AmeriCorps and based upon the knowledge that each case serves at least two individuals.

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## Other Services: Overview

NYSDRA has several state contracts including; the ACCES-VR Mediation Program, AmeriCorps Community Mediation Service Corps, Developmental Disabilities Planning Council Project, Early Intervention Mediation Program, Lemon Law Arbitration Program, and (until Dec 2020) the NYS Agricultural Mediation Program. NYSDRA manages the state contracts for mediation programs and oversees the program service delivery of the CDRCs. Each contract has case metrics and available funding for outreach efforts to increase awareness and usage of these community programs. For each of our programs we have an estimated caseload per year and have seen increases in certain programs as a result of community legal education through outreach, networking, informational materials, and online and print communications. Each program works closely with CDRCs and state partners to increase case load goals, refine service delivery, program improvements, and develop strategies to influence populations to utilize dispute resolution services as an alternative to other due process forums such as court processes and impartial hearings. For this fiscal year we conducted 1,140 cases and 4,824 individuals participated in CLE events or received informational materials.

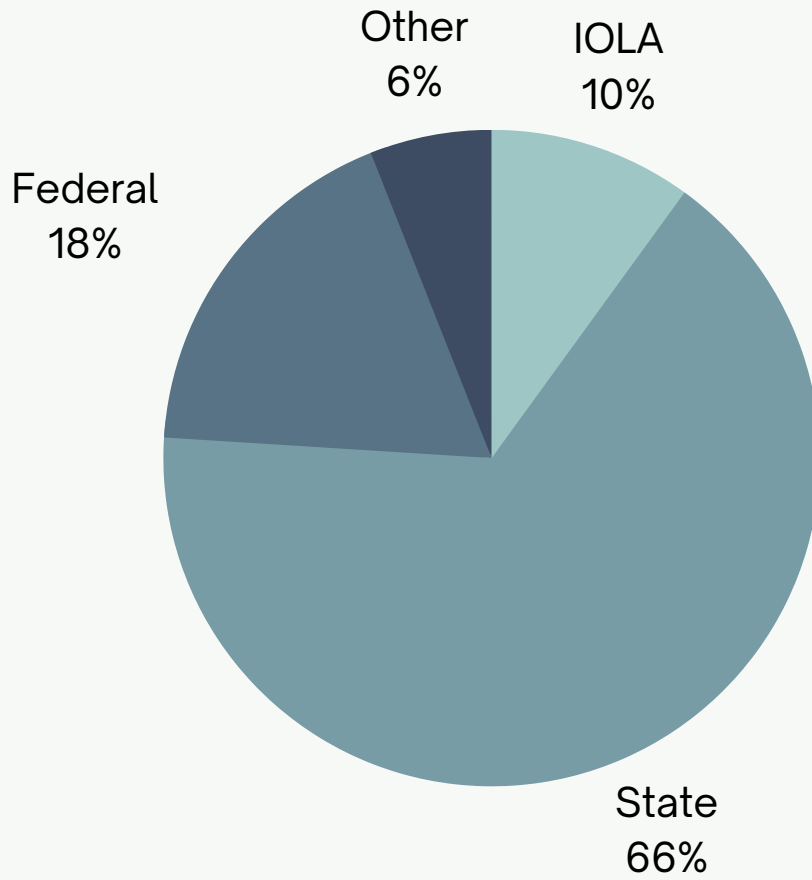
**154,126 People Benefitted by Services  
Other Than Direct Legal Representation**

## Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

The work of the CDRC network is dependent on the work of community volunteer mediators and arbitrators. NYSDRA provides support and technical assistance to volunteers across the state as well as training and professional development opportunities in the form of in-person trainings, webinars, and sessions at the annual conference. NYSDRA highly values the work of volunteers throughout the CDRC network as mediators and arbitrators. NYSDRA's next phase of the Community Mobilization initiative will focus on enhancing and strengthening the work of the centers by engaging with their communities, building relationships and trust as community service providers and focusing on volunteer recruitment and engagement and forging new relationships within communities to make CDRC services more widely known and accessible.

NYSDRA actively recruits and encourages participation from students and membership is made available at a discounted rate

# Sources of Funding



IOLA Grant	<b>\$110,210</b>
State Funding	<b>\$757,406</b>
Federal Funding	<b>\$211,562</b>
Other	<b>\$68,482</b>
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<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,147,660</b>