



NOV 30 2016

From: Acting Commissioner for Food and Drug Administration

Subject: Policy Statement for Conflict Prevention and Resolution Program

To: FDA Employees

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is committed to maintaining a harmonious work environment by resolving workplace conflicts at the earliest possible stage. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) urges all Federal Government agencies to attempt resolution of complaints of discrimination at the earliest possible stage of the process. FDA's policy is consistent with that of EEOC. Early resolution allows both parties to put the dispute behind them and direct their attention to making effective and productive contributions to the work and mission of the Agency. To this end, the FDA's Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR) program was created as an alternative to the existing formal grievance and EEO complaint processes to address work-related issues. One of the goals of CPR is to provide employees with an impartial, confidential avenue to resolve their workplace disputes in order to minimize escalation of disputes to the formal grievance processes.

The CPR Specialists are available to assist FDA employees with:

- Mediation - assisted negotiation with a neutral third party
- Facilitation - one-on-one or group problem solving, structured dialogue and meeting management to assist groups in achieving desired outcomes
- Consultation - assists with managing difficult situations
- Coaching – advising and training individuals in coping and problem-solving strategies
- Mentoring – providing focus and direction in career development and advancement
- Early Neutral Evaluation - assesses issues and offers recommendations for addressing issues in an impartial, non-adversarial way
- Training and Presentations - provides information and continuing education about conflict resolution strategies and prevention techniques
- Teambuilding and other group dynamic activities

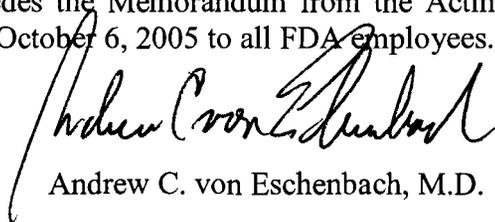
CPR Specialists are trained in all statutory regulations for filing formal grievances (negotiated and administrative), EEO complaints, and appeals to the Merit Systems Protection Board. All mandated timeframes are strictly adhered to in accordance with the application regulations. For example, a union grievance must be filed within 30 days of the alleged incident. EEO complaints must be filed within 45 days. CPR Specialists help

employees to candidly discuss issues and explore options. They work to assist the parties in achieving fair and equitable solutions, as well as triaging to other available resources.

If an employee elects mediation at any stage of the EEO process, management is required to participate. Both parties are entitled to representation during the mediation session. Additionally, any employee or manager can seek assistance through the CPR Office to address workplace issues that may arise and don't fall under Title 7.

Please contact the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Management on 301-827-4840 for more information on the CPR Program. Maintaining a harmonious and productive workplace is integral part of *building a strong FDA* and essential to accomplishing FDA's mission of *protecting and advancing America's health*.

This memorandum supersedes the Memorandum from the Acting Commissioner of Food and Drugs memorandum dated October 6, 2005 to all FDA employees.



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