

September, 2006 Report of the EPP Section Ethics Committee

Sent Final to LC October 11, 2006 by email.

To: EPP Section Leadership Council and the ACR Board of Directors

The Ethics Committee of the EPP Section of ACR continues to work on drafting Standards for Public Policy Facilitators in Agreement Seeking Processes. The Committee is using the Model Standards for Mediators as its starting point. The work of the Committee is focused on whether a new set of standards is needed or if a supplement can be appended to the Model Standards to satisfy the differences in the two processes.

In using the Model Standards as a starting point, the Committee is considering each section of the Model Standards and replacing the word “mediator” with the term “non-decision making neutral (NDN)” and the word “mediation” with “process(es)”. In reading each section of the Model Standards, if, with the referenced changes to wording, the model standard applies to facilitation of agreement seeking processes as the Committee members understand it, then the model standard is left with its current wording. If the standard, with referenced changes, does not suffice for the process of facilitation of agreement seeking processes, the Committee begins drafting new language.

Currently the Committee is working on the section on confidentiality; discussing how and when sunshine and open government laws affect this standard and if changes or supplements are needed that would only apply to facilitation of agreement seeking processes.

The plan of the Committee is to go through the entire Model Standards, draft initial language where needed, submit it to the EPP Leadership Council for comment, then to the EPP Section membership, followed by a second iteration. It is hoped this can be accomplished after the first of the year, 2007.

Recently, the Committee submitted a survey to members of the EPP Section. Twenty two responses were received. Despite the small response, the responses were useful to the Committee as they revealed that the Committee is working in the right direction and should continue its deliberations since; 1) members have no common understanding of what standards apply to facilitation; 2) that practitioners are not drawing a clear distinction between facilitation and mediation; and 3) that members have particular concerns about whether the Model Standards for confidentiality and impartiality fit public policy agreement seeking processes.

The specific results of the survey and copies of Reports to the EPP Section Leadership can be found at: <http://www.orconsensus.pdx.edu/ACREthicsCommittee.php>.