

## Mediator Qualifications Advisory Panel

by Risetete Posey

On Saturday, August 28, 1994, immediately following the close of the DRC's annual conference, the newly formed Mediator Qualifications Advisory Panel held their first meeting. All nine members of the Advisory Panel were in attendance; they are:

	County	Family	Circuit
Northern	Mary Ann Reigher	Joanna Mauer	Mattox Hair
Central	Bill Ditto	S. Joseph Davis, Jr.	Chuck Rieders
Southern	Moses Mitchell	Javier Perez-Abreu	Bruce Blitman

An addition to Florida Rules for Certified and Court-Appointed Mediators, rule 10.300, created the Advisory Panel on July 1, 1994. The purpose of the Advisory Panel is to render advisory ethics opinions to written requests for guidance regarding the Standards of Conduct for certified mediators. Rule 10.300(c), states that only those mediators subject to the rules, i.e. mediators who are certified or who have been appointed to mediate a case pursuant to a court order, are eligible to receive advice.

As outlined in rule 10.300(b), the Panel is composed of three county, three family, and three circuit mediators. Each geographic division served by the Mediator Qualifications Board shall have three mediators (one mediator in each certification area) on the Panel.

The Advisory Panel has decided to meet the second Friday or Saturday of every other month. The first review of mediator inquiries was held on October 14. At that meeting, the Panel reviewed three letters which were submitted by certified mediators requesting guidance. Because advisory opinions are to be discussed, the Mediator Qualifications Advisory Panel meetings are not subject to the open meeting laws and will be closed. Any available opinion will be provided on request from the Center and will be summarized in the next newsletter. All references to the mediator who requested the opinion will be kept confidential.

The next MQAP meeting is scheduled to be held during the week of December 4th. If you would like to submit a letter for the Panel to consider, please send it to the Mediator Qualifications Advisory Panel, care of the Dispute Resolution Center, Supreme Court Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32303-1905.

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Effective immediately, the mediator is restricted from performing any mediation by the means of telephone conference call except upon a specific written agreement of all parties to such mediation authorizing such.

In related news, the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Mediation and Arbitration Rules considered the recommendations for amendments to the grievance procedure suggested by the Mediator Qualifications Board and accepted the revisions in concept. A final version will be prepared and circulated to the Mediator Qualifications Board and the Rules Committee prior to final adoption by the Committee and submission to the Florida Supreme Court for consideration. Continue to watch future issues of the newsletter for progress on this project.