



ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ODR) Pilot Program in the Judicial Districts of Hartford and New Haven

What is Online Dispute Resolution?

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) is a pilot program available in the Judicial Districts of Hartford and New Haven to help parties resolve Contract Collections (C40) cases in a simple, quick and low-cost way. ODR may save time - most cases resolve within 90 days of the referral to ODR. It may save money - you can participate from anywhere at almost any time, usually without having to take time off from work or other commitments to come to the courthouse. No extra fee is charged for using ODR.

What should I know before I agree to use Online Dispute Resolution?

- ODR is voluntary: both parties must agree to use Online Dispute Resolution to resolve their case.
- ODR is only available in Contract Collections cases. These are disputes based on one party claiming that the other failed to pay money owed to them.
- Either party can opt out of the ODR Program within fifteen days of the date the case was referred to the program.
- Both parties must participate in mediation.

By agreeing to use ODR, you give up your right to:

- Have a jury trial or appear in person to present your case to the court at a formal evidentiary hearing.
- File an appeal from any decision made by the court on your case. The court's decision is final and binding.
- Object to evidence presented by the other side. Both sides will exchange and submit evidence to the court. The court will review the evidence submitted by the parties and determine what is relevant and reliable.

What should I do if I want to use Online Dispute Resolution?

Plaintiff

1. **Prepare your complaint** and have a marshal or proper officer serve it on (deliver it to) the defendant along with your [Plaintiff Participation Notice](#), a blank [Appearance](#) form, an [ODR Notice to Defendant](#) and an [ODR Answer](#) form. After the documents are served, return them to the court with the entry fee.

Defendant

1. **Fill out and sign the [ODR Answer](#) and the [Appearance](#) form**, file them with the court, and send a copy to the plaintiff. File the documents within the time allowed by the Practice Book rules.

What happens once we agree to use Online Dispute Resolution?

2. **Exchange evidence** about your claim with each other and file it with the court, on paper or electronically. Evidence can include copies of receipts, repair orders, warranties, canceled checks, money orders, bills, contracts, a sworn statement from you or a witness, or anything else that might help your case.
3. **Respond** to the mediator and participate in the mediation by phone, video conference, or in person.
4. **Mediate**: If you reach an agreement, the mediator will write down the agreement for you to sign, and will file the agreement with the court.

What happens if we do not reach an agreement to resolve our dispute?

5. If you do not reach an agreement, the judge or judge trial referee will decide the case based on the evidence you have submitted or, if more evidence is needed, refer the case back to the regular court docket for a hearing.

To learn more, visit www.jud.ct.gov/ODR or email ODR@jud.ct.gov.

ADA NOTICE

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact a court clerk or an ADA contact person listed at www.jud.ct.gov/ADA.