



Media Contacts:

Michael C. Clark
American Arbitration Association
+1.212.716.3978
clarkm@adr.org

Laura Simpson
JConnelly
+1.973.713.8834
lsimpson@jconnelly.com

Significant Tech Investment Enhances AAA-ICDR® Facilitation of Virtual, In-Person & Hybrid ADR Hearings

Adoption of Voice-Activated, Multi-Camera Videoconferencing Solution Enables Parties Seeking Resolution via Arbitration & Mediation to Receive Uninterrupted, Seamless Service

NEW YORK, N.Y.—March 22, 2021—The American Arbitration Association-International Centre for Dispute Resolution® (AAA-ICDR) recently incorporated smart videoconferencing technology, which allows arbitration and mediation hearings to proceed seamlessly in-person or virtually—in keeping with pandemic-related social distancing rules and travel restrictions. In addition, this enhanced videoconferencing solution enables parties absent from in-person hearings to fully participate virtually, from anywhere in the world, in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedures.

The multi-camera system is a hands-free solution in which all camera movement and switching are automatically activated by the voice of the active speaker. The built-in recording and streaming capability enables proceedings to be recorded and archived, and allows arbitrators, witnesses, and other parties who are not present in-person, or who are in different rooms due to social distancing requirements, to follow along and engage remotely. Up to seven cameras can be positioned in one room as needed. The enhanced system works in conjunction with automatic tracking cameras, installed by the AAA-ICDR, which follow active speakers around a room based on voice detection.

“We are excited to launch a new and innovative technology solution that will provide our clients with unique ADR solutions that meet their needs,” said **Michael A. Marra, Vice President, Construction Division**. “COVID-19 has changed everything, but no matter how long social distancing and other pandemic rules remain in effect, or what the post-pandemic reality looks like, the AAA-ICDR is positioned to ensure people receive uninterrupted ADR services even if not everyone involved can be in the same room or venue.”

The AAA-ICDR has remained a source of ADR service reliability during the COVID-19 pandemic, having conducted more than 7,000 virtual hearings between March 1, 2020 and March 1, 2021. The enhanced videoconferencing technology has been installed at the AAA’s New York City Midtown location, a hub for domestic and international arbitration, and is scheduled to be installed at additional AAA-ICDR hearing facilities soon.

The AAA-ICDR’s videoconferencing and other technology solutions also allow parties to broaden their selection of potential case arbitrators to include those who meet sector experience or diversity criteria, but live in another city or state. The percentage of women and minorities in the AAA-ICDR’s roster of arbitrators increased to 27% in 2020, and 33% of arbitrators selected by parties to oversee cases last



year met AAA diversity criteria. To learn more about the AAA-ICDR's commitment to diversity and inclusion, please visit <https://www.adr.org/RosterDiversity>.

“The combination of our ongoing investment in cutting-edge, secure technology and our organization's 95 years of commitment to advancing ADR has ensured that we can hit the ground running when parties resume the resolution of their disputes in-person,” said **Jeffrey T. Zaino, Esq., Vice President, Commercial Division**. “Our videoconferencing enhancements enable us to stay true to the cost- and time-effective nature of arbitration throughout the remainder of the pandemic, and beyond.”

About the American Arbitration Association

The not-for-profit American Arbitration Association® (AAA®) is the leading provider of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services for parties in commercial disputes, having administered more than six million ADR cases since its founding in 1926. With 26 offices in the United States, in addition to Mexico, Singapore, and Bahrain, the AAA provides organizations of all sizes in virtually every industry with ADR services and products. For more information, visit www.adr.org.

About the International Centre for Dispute Resolution

The International Centre for Dispute Resolution® (ICDR®) is the international division of the American Arbitration Association (AAA) and the largest international provider of dispute resolution services. Established in 1996, the ICDR serves parties from over 100 countries with multilingual staff experienced in international dispute resolution proceedings, and a roster of over 725 arbitrators and mediators. For more information, visit www.icdr.org.

###