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Shumaker Partner Peter Silverman Helps Launch New Nationwide Early Dispute Resolution Process

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The American Arbitration Association’s nationwide rollout introduces risk-analysis approach that slashes the cost and time of resolving disputes—reshaping the traditional law firm litigation model

TOLEDO, OHIO— With more than four decades as a litigator, Shumaker Partner Peter Silverman became increasingly disillusioned by a legal system that often rewards prolonged litigation rather than early resolution.

In 2019, Silverman founded the Early Dispute Resolution (EDR) Institute, developing a structured risk-informed approach designed to help parties settle disputes before they escalate into costly, years-long legal battles. (<https://www.edrinstitute.org/>)

“Lawyers have asked me, ‘Why do this? This is how litigators earn their keep,’” said Peter. “My answer is that we have an ethical obligation to our clients to pursue the earliest and most economical resolution of their disputes. It’s also good business—this is what clients want.”

This month, the American Arbitration Association (AAA) began rolling out the EDR Mediation program nationwide, marking the organization’s first new mediation offering in decades. (<https://www.adr.org/panel/edr-panel/>) The EDR Institute trained and qualified the mediators who serve on the AAA’s EDR Mediation panel.

The process builds on traditional mediation frameworks but introduces disciplined risk analysis to help parties make informed settlement decisions. “The goal,” said Peter, is to equip parties with the same information and perspective that they use to make decisions in their businesses and their personal lives.

Shumaker has fully supported Peter’s efforts, and many of its lawyers have completed the training in the

EDR Mediation Process.

“Delivering results to our clients is the firm’s lodestar—and we’re excited to offer this new process to our clients,” said Jennifer Compton, Managing Partner at Shumaker. “This milestone is the result of years of dedicated effort, and in particular Peter’s vision and persistence in moving this initiative forward. His leadership, combined with the support and collaboration of our attorneys and professional staff, made it possible to bring this process to life for the benefit of our clients.”