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(a) Purpose.

The Court recognizes that formal litigation of disputes in bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings frequently imposes significant economic burdens on parties and often delays resolution of those disputes. The procedures established by these Local Rules are intended primarily to provide litigants with the means to resolve their disputes more quickly, at less cost, and often without the stress and pressure of litigation.

The Court also notes that the volume of cases, contested matters and adversary proceedings filed in this District has placed substantial burdens upon counsel, litigants and the Court, all of which contribute to the delay in the resolution of disputed matters. A Court authorized dispute resolution program, in which litigants and counsel meet with a Resolution Advocate, offers an opportunity to parties to settle legal disputes promptly and less expensively, to their mutual satisfaction. By these Local Rules the BDRP is adopted for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California.

It is the Court's intention that the BDRP shall operate in such a way as to allow the participants to take advantage of and utilize a wide variety of alternative dispute resolution methods. These methods may include but are not limited to: mediation, negotiation, early neutral evaluation and settlement facilitation. The specific method or methods employed will be those that are appropriate and applicable as determined by the Resolution Advocate and the parties, and will vary from matter to matter.

(b) Scope.

These Local Rules apply to all matters referred to the BDRP. All of the other Bankruptcy Local Rules apply, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these Bankruptcy Local Rules 9040-1 through 9050-1.

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