



CPR Announces New Diversity Commitment

July 3, 2020

Updated pledge encourages corporations, law firms and CPR itself to take specific steps to increase the selection of diverse neutrals in ADR matters

New York, NY (July 3, 2020)—**The International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR)**, a global non-profit organization that manages conflict to enable purpose, announced an updated version of its [Diversity Commitment](#). The Commitment grew out of a challenge from CPR’s Diversity in ADR Task Force to do more, and is just the latest example of CPR’s demonstrated leadership in and commitment to ensuring that all of the talent available is deployed in dispute prevention and resolution. (CPR’s four-pronged strategy is detailed [here](#)).

Generally, corporate Diversity Commitment signatories pledge to include diverse neutrals among any list of mediators or arbitrators they propose and to track diverse selections in their matters. Law firm signatories pledge to discuss the value of diverse neutrals with their clients. And CPR endeavors to include at least 30% diverse neutrals in its proposed slates and appointments.

“Discussions about diversity, while of course important as a first step, ultimately mean very little without follow through,” said CPR President & CEO, **Allen Waxman**. “CPR’s new Diversity Commitment aims to drive that follow through and to result in greater selection of diverse neutrals.”

Other recent diversity efforts at CPR include:

- The recently-released (April 2020) [Diversity & Inclusion Model Clause](#) that allows parties to pre-commit to the selection of a diverse neutral in a three-person tribunal
- Newly-created alternative [pathways](#) for neutrals who wish to join CPR’s employment panels, and in particular, its mass claims panel, aimed at increasing the diversity of those panels by facilitating the application and admission process
- The addition of a [diversity statement](#) to CPR’s nomination letters
- The option for neutrals to [self-identify](#) as diverse on slates of candidates being provided to parties; and
- The [Young Lawyer Rule](#) recently added to CPR’s revised [Rules for Administered and Non-Administered Arbitration of Domestic and International Disputes](#).

The constituents of CPR – corporate members, like Shell Oil Company and Visa Inc., law firms, like Debevoise & Plimpton, and the CPR Diversity Task Force itself – are excited by this newest initiative.

“We support this Diversity Commitment, and share its goal to improve the inclusion of diverse neutrals in mediating and arbitrating our matters at Shell,” said **Kimberly R. Phillips**, General Counsel, Global Litigation, Shell Oil Company. “This initiative by CPR is an important contribution to prompting other companies as well as law firms to do the same, as is the step CPR itself is taking to improve the diversity of candidates on the slates nominated for selection.”

“The 2020 Diversity Commitment is an important next step towards building greater diversity and inclusion in the legal community,” said **Kelly Tullier**, EVP, General Counsel, Visa Inc.

“It’s been my honor to work with CPR to help ensure across the board equality in the selection of neutrals by the law firms and corporations that engage its services,” said Hon. **Timothy K. Lewis** (Ret.), of Schnader, Harrison, Segal & Lewis LLP and Co-Chair of CPR’s Diversity in ADR Task Force. “Today’s announcement reiterates, and strengthens, CPR’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. I hope that law firms and their clients will adopt these measures because we can, and we must, do better – all of us. The CPR Diversity Commitment presents a much needed opportunity to do so.”

“Our members and the legal community more broadly have increasingly recognized the importance of achieving greater diversity in the neutrals asked to help resolve disputes,” said **John Kiernan**, of Debevoise & Plimpton. “The 2020 Diversity Commitment reflects CPR’s determination - now, especially - to support and foster that desired increase in diversity, and to offer processes that give others better opportunities to support diversity.”

ABOUT CPR

Established in 1977, CPR is an independent nonprofit organization that helps prevent and resolve legal conflict more effectively and efficiently. It manages conflict to enable purpose.

The **CPR Institute** drives a global prevention and dispute resolution culture through the **thought leadership** of its diverse membership of top companies, law firms, lawyers, academics, and leading mediators and arbitrators around the world. The Institute **convenes** best practice and industry-oriented committees and **hosts** global and regional meetings to **share** practices and **develop** innovative tools and resources. The Institute **trains** on dispute prevention and resolution, **publishes** a monthly journal on related topics, and **advocates** for supporting and expanding the capacity for dispute prevention and resolution globally.

CPR Dispute Resolution harnesses the thought leadership and output of the Institute while providing independent **ADR services** – mediation, arbitration, early neutral evaluation, dispute resolution boards and others – through **innovative and practical rules and procedures** and through CPR’s **Panel of Distinguished Neutrals**.