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Overview

Creates an Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution within the Bureau of Mediation Services. Specifies duties for the office, which include promoting use of mediation and making grants to nonprofit entities that assist in dispute resolution.

Section

- 1 Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution.** States the policy for enacting this law. Requires the Commissioner of Mediation Services to establish an Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution. States the duties of the office, which include promoting use of mediation, assisting government units in improving collaboration and dispute resolution, providing technical assistance and information on best practices, and establishing dispute resolution projects.
- 2 Grants.** Requires the Commissioner of Mediation Services to make grants to nonprofit entities that assist in resolution of disputes. Provides eligibility requirements. Provides that grants may be made to an organization only if the organization receives at least half of its annual budget from a source other than the state, unless the commissioner determines a larger grant is appropriate for an organization that has been in existence less than three years. Provides that grant agreements may include performance-based standards and requirements for matching contributions. Requires grant recipients to agree to comply with standards in current law governing dispute resolution programs. States that general laws and policies applicable to state grants also apply to grants under this section. Specifies disputes that cannot be covered by grants under this section, including certain disputes involving violence against persons, competency or civil commitment, and matters involving neglect,

Section

dependency or termination of parental rights.

- 3** **Other applicable laws.** Provides that existing laws governing confidentiality of communications for dispute resolution and governing civil mediation apply to dispute resolution under this chapter.
- 4** **Appropriation.** Appropriates \$750,000 to the Commissioner of Mediation Services for the Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution. Provides that at least 70 percent is for grants.