

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Superior Court of Pennsylvania Establishes Appellate Mediation Program

**HARRISBURG, October 6, 2006** — The Superior Court of Pennsylvania has established an appellate mediation program to provide litigants with a prompt, effective, alternative means of creatively resolving disputes without many of the expenses associated with litigation.

The program initially will apply to civil appeals from the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The mediation process will occur on a fast-track basis during the pre-briefing stage of appeal.

With the implementation of this program, Superior Court joins numerous federal and state courts that have adopted mediation programs as successful tools for case management. Superior Court, one of the busiest appellate courts in the nation, is projected to docket more than 8,200 new appeals in 2006, an increase of about 3.5 % from the number docketed in 2005.

Superior Court is working with fewer judges this year due to the retirement of four of its members in the past year. The creation of this mediation program will enable the court to better manage its increasing caseload as well as provide a savings to litigants in terms of costs and time on appeal.

P. Douglas Sisk has been appointed as the director of the Superior Court Mediation Program. Sisk is an experienced attorney with extensive appellate and mediation experience, and has developed a similar program for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

He served variously as senior staff attorney, Clerk of Court, and assistant director of the Third Circuit mediation program. In 1991, the Courts of Appeals delegated Sisk to research and develop, with now-Chief Judge Anthony J. Scirica, an experimental mediation program.

Since it was formally adopted, the Third Circuit program has been a valuable addition to a busy appellate court. Sisk later served as assistant director of the program, and has actively mediated numerous appeals, as well as pretrial proceedings in the District Court and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. After leaving the Court of Appeals, he served as the director of dispute resolution for the A.H.P. Settlement Trust — established to administer claimants' benefits in the massive national class-action diet drug settlement. As the program director for the Superior Court, Sisk will select and mediate Eastern District appeals that are appropriate for alternate dispute resolution.