

ARBITRATOR APPOINTMENT AND SCREENING GUIDELINES

1. All new arbitrators must complete a uniform application form. Completed application forms should be reviewed by the local Civil Presiding Judge and bar arbitrator selection committee. This is necessary to ensure that arbitrators are not only qualified in accordance with *R. 4:21A-2*, but that they have the confidence of the local judiciary and bar. If the applicant is deemed to be acceptable, he or she must complete the required training in accordance with *R. 1:40-12(c)(1)* and submit proof of the training to the AOC Civil Practice Division, P.O. Box 981, Trenton, NJ 08625. Upon receipt of such proof, the AOC shall advise the Civil Presiding Judge and the Arbitration Administrator of each county for which the individual had been tentatively approved prior to the completion of training. Thereafter, the individual will be added to the appropriate roster in the county and the AOC Civil Practice Division will be advised. Individuals are only eligible for inclusion on the roster of the county or counties in which they appear in court. It is unnecessary that they maintain an office in the county or counties. Any individual who feels that he or she has been aggrieved during the application or review process may bring this matter to the attention of the local Assignment Judge.
2. Every arbitrator must also complete at least two hours of approved continuing training in accordance with *R.1:40-2(c)(2)* every two years. They should also be regularly evaluated by the Civil Presiding Judge, the local bar committee, the Civil Division Manager and Arbitration Administrator. It is imperative that staff be an integral part of this process insofar as evaluations should also include staff input regarding arbitrator scheduling issues, time management, promptness, cooperation, professionalism, availability and other relevant issues. Evaluation forms have been developed and may assist in this process. These set forth the criteria that should be considered for each arbitrator. Remedial measures, *e.g.*, mentoring, should be developed for arbitrators who are found to have difficulties. Any widespread shortcomings identified as a result of the evaluation process should be addressed at county meetings and results thereafter monitored. It is strongly recommended that counties establish ongoing evaluation processes.
3. Each county is encouraged to establish a local mentoring committee to provide assistance to arbitrators, court staff, and judges regarding any arbitration-related issues. This can be part of the existing bar committees.
4. Before compiling the roster each year, the Arbitration Administrator will contact the AOC and verify that individuals have completed the necessary training.
5. Every year, on or before September 1, every county must file a copy of all rosters of arbitrators with the Administrative Office of the Courts, Civil Practice Division.