



AMERICAN
ARBITRATION
ASSOCIATION®

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION®

The 20th Annual AAA® Construction Conference

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

A Structured Approach to Managing Construction Disputes

June 12, 2025 New York, NY

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20th Annual AAA Construction Conference Conference Agenda

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

8:00-8:30

Continental Breakfast

8:30-8:45

Welcome & Introductions

Michael A. Marra, Division Vice President, American Arbitration Association®

8:45-10:00

The Client's Playbook: A Chat With General Counsel About Strategies for Successful Arbitration

Join this interactive session where top general counsel from leading construction firms share their insider strategies for navigating disputes. From selecting the right arbitrators to managing claims documentation and tackling key contractual issues, these legal executives will provide practical insights from the client's perspective. Learn what drives decision-making in arbitration and how to position your case for success in construction disputes.

Faculty:

Jeff Brannen, SVP, Chief Legal Officer, Texas and Arizona Balfour Beatty; Dallas, TX

Tom Whittaker, Executive VP and Chief Legal Officer, JE Dunn Construction Group; Kansas City, MO

Jeffrey Cruz, Corporate Counsel, Skanska USA Building Inc.; New York, NY

Michele Laine, Associate General Counsel, Mastec Inc.; Coral Gables, FL

Jessica Rothman, Senior Corporate Counsel, Turner Construction Company; New York, NY

Laura Howell, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Comfort Systems USA, Inc., Houston, TX

Session Moderator:

Giovanni Ruscitti, Chairman and General Counsel, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti LLP; Boulder, CO

10:00-10:15

Break

10:15-11:15

Blueprints for Resolution: Designing ADR Clauses That Work

Disputes are common in the construction industry, but with well-designed ADR clauses, you can minimize disruptions and foster collaboration. Our expert speakers will share best practices for drafting clear and enforceable ADR clauses, tailored to different project types. Whether you're an attorney or an industry professional, this session will empower you to take control of your project's destiny and build a strong foundation for successful conflict resolution.

Faculty:

Samantha L. Brutout, Partner, Dingess, Foster, Luciana, Davidson, & Chleboski LLP; Pittsburgh, PA

Eugene J. Heady, Partner, Smith Currie Oles LLP; Atlanta, GA

Y.Lisa Colon, Partner, Saul Ewing LLP; Fort Lauderdale, FL

Cara Peterson, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Adolfson & Peterson Construction; Minneapolis, MN

Session Moderator:

Jacqueline Vega Cintron, Vice President, Construction Division, American Arbitration Association



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THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

11:15-12:30

Breaking the Clause: Tackling Problematic Contract Clauses

In this session, participants will explore practical solutions for managing disputes arising from poorly drafted or ambiguous contract clauses. Legal experts will provide insights into identifying problematic clauses, understanding their potential impact on arbitration, and discussing strategies for an effective process. You'll leave this session with actionable tools to handle defective clauses and keep disputes on track towards resolution.

Faculty:

John Marshall Cook, Partner, Fox Rothschild LLP; Washington, DC

Christopher M. Burke, Senior Partner, Varela Lee Metz & Guarino; Tysons Corner, VA

Robert Nida, Shareholder and Senior Litigation Counsel, Nida & Romy, P.C.; Los Angeles, CA

Buck Beltzer, Partner, BBG Construction Law; Greenwood Village, CO

Session Moderator:

Michael R. Powell, Vice President, Construction Division, American Arbitration Association

12:30-1:30

Lunch

1:30-2:45

Data, Documents, and Discovery: Maximizing Efficiency with eDiscovery Tools

This session will delve into the evolving landscape of eDiscovery, focusing on how legal professionals can efficiently manage the vast amounts of digital data involved in modern discovery processes. Attendees will explore best practices for utilizing eDiscovery tools to streamline document review, ensure compliance, and mitigate risks. Through expert insights, participants will gain actionable strategies for navigating the complexities of data management and improving efficiency in legal discovery workflows.

Faculty:

Richard J. Tyler, Partner, Jones Walker LLP; New Orleans, LA

Wendy Venoit, Partner, Cozen O'Connor; Boston, MA

Cat Damico, Assistant General Counsel, Kiewit; Omaha, NE

Carolyn Southerland, Senior Consultant, Construction Discovery Experts; Houston, TX

Session Moderator:

Rod Toben, Vice President, Construction Division, American Arbitration Association

2:45-3:00

Break



20th Annual AAA Construction Conference Conference Agenda

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

3:00-4:00

Witness Statements vs. Direct Examination: How International Arbitration Practices Are Being Applied in Domestic Construction Arbitration

This session will explore the growing use of witness statements in domestic construction arbitration, a practice traditionally rooted in international arbitration driven by demands for efficiency and cost control. Topics will cover how this practice streamlines proceedings, allows for more focused cross-examination and provides arbitrators with early insight into key testimony. Learn practical approaches for drafting effective statements, timing their submission for maximum impact, and integrating them with documentary evidence. Attendees will gain insights on best practices, potential challenges, and the preferences of arbitrators and counsel in utilizing witness statements to effectively present their case. The panel will highlight actionable strategies for determining when witness statements may be more advantageous than traditional direct examination, and how to leverage both methods to present the strongest case possible.

Faculty:

Adrian Bastianelli, III, Of Counsel, Peckar & Abramson, P.C.; Washington, DC
Kathleen O. Barnes, Senior Partner, Watt, Tieder, Hoffar & Fitzgerald, LLP; McLean, VA
Albert Bates, Jr., Partner, Troutman Pepper Locke, LLP; Pittsburgh, PA
Alvin F. Lindsay, Partner, Hogan Lovells US, LLP; Miami, FL

Session Moderator:

Luis M. Martinez, Vice President, International Centre for Dispute Resolution®

4:00-5:00

The Ever-Changing Legal Ethical Landscape and What You Need to Know

This panel will address key ethics and liability issues in the post-Covid hybrid and virtual workforce. Topics include emerging ethical concerns in AI, updates on the Sedona Conference and state laws, liability under the Corporate Transparency Act, and what constitutes the unauthorized practice of law. The panel will also explore attorney-client privilege in electronic stored information and arbitration, including applicable laws, ethical obligations, and how arbitrators might handle claims of privileged documents.

Faculty:

Tracey James, Partner, Hamilton Stephens Steele + Martin, PLLC; Charlotte, NC
Karen P. Layng, President, M.A.I.T. Co; Chicago, IL
Brenda K. Radmacher, Partner, Seyfarth Shaw LLP; Los Angeles, CA
Ernest Brown, Co-Founder and CEO, Project Neutral; San Francisco, CA

Session Moderator:

Iman Hyder-Eliz, Vice President, Construction Division, American Arbitration Association

5:00-5:15

Closing Remarks

Michael R. Powell, Vice President, Construction Division, American Arbitration Association

5:15

Cocktail Reception



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REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To register online, visit www.aaaeducation.org

Registration Fee:

Early Bird: \$395.00 (To get the Early Bird price, you must use promo code **25CCEB01**. This code expires on May 12, 2025)
General: \$450.00

Cancellation Policy. Please do not make any travel arrangements until you receive a confirmation email. Should you need to cancel your registration, send your written request via email to AAAEducation@adr.org by May 29, 2025 for a refund of 50% of your registration fee. We regret that no refunds can be made after May 29, 2025. Substitution of attendees can be made at any time.

VENUE

New York Law School

185 West Broadway,
New York, NY 10013

HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

Hilton Garden Inn New York/Tribeca

39 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10013

Individual Reservations can be made [here](#): Group Code #900 or call 212-966-4091.

Refer to Group Booking ID# 900, 2025 AAA Construction Conference Room Block when reserving your accommodations.

Please note: There are a limited number of rooms reserved at a special rate for this event.

CLE INFORMATION

West LegalEdcenter is procuring continuing legal education (CLE) credits on behalf of American Arbitration Association. This program is available for CLE credits in California, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Credit amounts vary by attendance verification and jurisdictional rules and cannot be confirmed in advance of the program.

Questions? Please contact Jacqueline Vega at VegaJ@adr.org or 646-240-4624.