



## Stages of the Arbitration Process

This document contains information about the various stages of the arbitration process that you can expect to experience as you proceed through the case. While each case is different and may have unique circumstances that can change the usual procedures, arbitrations usually proceed through the following general stages:

### 1. The Case Initiation Stage:

- The AAA sends out a letter or email notifying the parties that the case has been filed. This communication will also provide information regarding the arbitration process.
- Dates for when the respondent should file an answer to the claimant's Demand for Arbitration and for all parties to provide any other needed information will be set at this time as well.
- Further, if there are any fees required from any party at this time, the AAA will also request said fees.

### 2. Arbitrator Invitation Stage:

- Depending on what process is set forth in the Rules that govern your arbitration, the AAA invites an arbitrator or arbitrators to serve on the case.
- As part of this process, the arbitrator reviews case information, checks for conflicts and returns a signed oath document, along with any relevant disclosures, if applicable.

### 3. Arbitrator Appointment Stage:

- Parties are notified of the appointed arbitrator and provided the opportunity to object to this arbitrator serving on the case.
- A due date for any objections is set and if any objections are received, the AAA will conduct a process to decide if the arbitrator should be kept on or removed from the case.
- If the AAA decides to remove the arbitrator, the case returns to the arbitrator invitation stage, as previously described.
- If the Arbitrator is kept on the case, the case continues to the next stage.

### 4. Preliminary Hearing and Information Exchange Stage:

- After appointment and confirmation of the Arbitrator, the preliminary hearing conference call with the parties and the arbitrator will be scheduled and held.
- During this call, preliminary issues are addressed, the exchange of information between the parties is scheduled and a hearing date is set.
- After the call is held, the Arbitrator will issue a written document called a "scheduling order", which confirms all important dates and specifics discussed on the call.



## 5. Hearing Stage:

- During this stage, the parties present their case to the arbitrator.
- This process can take place in person, over the telephone, or by the parties submitting written documents. The parties' arbitration agreement and the applicable Rules that govern the case will dictate the process.
- Sometimes, parties will also submit written arguments after the hearing at the direction of the arbitrator.

## 6. Award Stage:

- After the hearing is completed and the arbitrator determines no more evidence will be presented, the hearing(s) is closed and a date for the issuance of the award is set.
- The arbitrator renders a written award which decides the outcome of the case and is sent to the parties. At this point the case is over and AAA closes its file.

Again, these are the general stages of most arbitration cases. As the arbitration progresses through these stages, the AAA will communicate specific directions and information about each. It is important to read this information carefully, and respond and participate appropriately throughout the process.