



## Summary of Revisions to Consumer Arbitration Rules

In 2024, the AAA® embarked on a project to revise our Consumer Arbitration Rules, with an eye toward modernizing and clarifying these rules. The AAA is committed to maintaining fairness, efficiency, and transparency in our arbitration processes, and to that end the AAA amended the Rules with the following principles in mind:

**Transparency:** Provide clear information about the rules and the responsibilities of all parties.

**Fairness:** Adhere to the standards reflected in the Consumer Due Process Protocol and promote neutrality in arbitrator selection.

**Efficiency and Accessibility:** Streamline arbitration processes to reduce time and costs.

**Ethics and Conduct:** Incorporate guidelines for the conduct expected of parties and their representatives.

Although the AAA did not revise every rule, we edited many with these goals in mind. Additionally, we repositioned some rules to create a more logical and uniform flow within the rules set.

- Increased the time period for a stay for a party seeking judicial intervention from 30 to 90 days. *(Rule R-2)*
- The AAA can now administratively consolidate into one case multiple claims filed by the same party arising out of the same contract. Multiple claims filed by the same party arising out of different contracts may be treated as individual cases. *(Rule R-4)*
- Specified procedures for determining which agreement applies when that issue is in dispute. *(Rule R-5)*
- Clarified procedures for when parties dispute claims are within the jurisdiction of small claims court. *(Rule R-9)*
- Clarified the circumstances under which the AAA may decline or cease administration of a case. *(Rule R-10)*
- Added mediation rule. *(Rule R-11)*
- Clarified procedures for registering a consumer clause and specified procedure for registering clauses not previously registered when a case is filed. *(Rule R-12)*
- Specified timeframe for locale objections to be submitted. *(Rule R-14)*
- Where a consumer case starts with a three-arbitrator panel but a vacancy occurs, specified that the remaining arbitrators may hear the case unless otherwise agreed to by the parties. *(Rule R-18)*
- Reworked exchange of information rule to emphasize arbitrator's authority to grant necessary information exchange as required for a party to fairly present its claims and defenses. *(Rule R-20)*
- Specified that hearings will be held virtually or by other means as approved by the arbitrator, unless the parties agree otherwise. *(Rule R-22)*



- Specified procedures for counsel to withdraw. (*Rule R-24*)
- Revised arbitrator's authority for allowing motions, including dispositive motions. (*Rule R-31*)
- Specified authority of arbitrator to subpoena witnesses and documents. (*Rule R-32*)
- Provided for a 7-day period after the final date for submission of documents or the final day of hearing for the arbitrator to decide whether hearing can be closed. (*Rule R-37*)
- Specified that the AAA may initiate administrative communications with parties jointly or individually. (*Rule R-41*)
- Added new rule regarding confidentiality. (*Rule R-42*)
- Added new rule regarding majority decisions for three-arbitrator panels. (*Rule R-43*)
- Added authority for arbitrators to modify or clarify an award on their own initiative. (*Rule R-49*)
- Clarified deposit procedures. (*Rule R-55*)
- Specified that the AAA may decline to administer future matters involving a business that fails to pay fees. (*Rule R-56*)
- Added new rule to provide arbitrators authority to issue sanctions. (*Rule R-57*)
- Added new rule specifying appeals procedure for consumer cases. (*Rule R-58*)
- Added new Consumer Mediation Procedures. (*M-1 – M-17*)