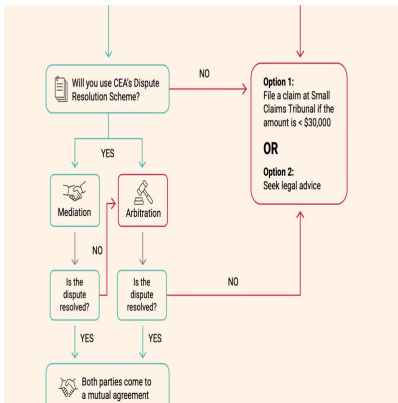




Property Agent Dispute: Mediation, Arbitration or Another Route?

Description

CEA's Dispute Resolution Scheme is designed for certain contractual disputes between consumers and property agencies or agents. Mediation seeks a negotiated settlement; arbitration produces a binding decision under the scheme. A disciplinary complaint, contractor dispute or landlord-tenant claim may require a different route.

This article is written for a buyer, seller, landlord or tenant in a dispute with a property agent or agency and resolves one task: test whether CEA's dispute-resolution scheme fits the complaint and understand the difference between mediation, arbitration and discipline. It is deliberately narrow. The decision should be made from the controlling condition and current evidence, not from a similar case or a convenient search snippet.

Put the issue in the right column

Your situation	Next move
You want a negotiated settlement	Assess mediation and settlement authority
You need a binding determination under the scheme	Check arbitration eligibility, costs and agreement terms
You allege professional misconduct	Use the regulatory complaint route and do not assume it awards compensation
The dispute is with a landlord or contractor	Use the forum that has jurisdiction over that relationship

For a property decision, the useful file is built around the property, parties, agreement, money trail and remedy. A label such as owner, agent or MCST is only the starting point. The document and the act determine what follows.

Name the respondent correctly

The agency agreement identifies the consumer, salesperson and property agency. A complaint against the wrong legal party delays resolution. The controlling rule is set out by [CEA dispute resolution guide](#).

Action: Copy the names and licence details from the signed agreement. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

State the remedy

Refund, compensation, document correction, apology and discipline are different outcomes.

Action: Write the amount or non-money result sought. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

Build a short chronology

A useful file shows appointment, representation, payment, discovery of the issue and attempts to resolve it.

Action: Use dates and attach one supporting item per event. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

Understand mediation

A mediator facilitates agreement but does not impose a result. Settlement depends on authority and willingness. The companion procedure was checked against [CEA complaint guide](#).

Action: Confirm who can approve terms at the session. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

Understand arbitration

Arbitration is adjudicative and can lead to a binding award within the applicable scheme.

Action: Review eligibility, fees and finality before electing it. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

Separate discipline from compensation

Regulatory action protects standards; it is not automatically a civil damages process.

Action: Run the complaint and remedy analysis separately. Add the date and the document or screen used, so the conclusion can be checked without reconstructing it from messages later.

Two LBRD tools to use

a remedy-to-forum table that prevents a disciplinary complaint being mistaken for a compensation claim

Build this from the facts above. Give every row one owner and one status: confirmed, pending or not applicable. Where a number is involved, show the input and arithmetic. Where a route or eligibility test is involved, show the condition that selected the branch. This is LBRD analysis, not an authority decision.

a six-event evidence chronology designed for a first case assessment

Use this as the second-pass check. Link the conclusion to its source, record the date checked and attach the evidence that supports the next action. Unknowns stay visible; they are not filled with assumptions merely to complete the sheet.

Worked example

A seller says an agent failed to present an offer and seeks the difference between that offer and the eventual sale price. The file must first establish appointment, receipt of the offer, communication records, causation and the remedy. A CEA complaint may examine conduct, while any compensation route turns on the scheme, agreement and evidence. One filing does not guarantee every outcome.

The example changes one consequential fact at a time. That matters because the same headline question can produce a different route when the party, date, amount, document, location or service level changes. Treat the result as a worked analysis and confirm the live facts for the real case.

What the working file should contain

Field	What to record
Subject	a buyer, seller, landlord or tenant in a dispute with a property agent or agency
Decision	test whether CEA's dispute-resolution scheme fits the complaint and understand the difference between mediation, arbitration and discipline
Evidence date	The date each official page, record or notice was checked
Owner	The person responsible for the next action
Fallback	The safe alternative if a condition is not met

Final check

1. Assess mediation and settlement authority.
2. Check arbitration eligibility, costs and agreement terms.
3. Use the regulatory complaint route and do not assume it awards compensation.

4. Use the forum that has jurisdiction over that relationship.
5. Review eligibility, fees and finality before electing it.
6. Run the complaint and remedy analysis separately.

Before money or a deadline is committed, compare the signed document with the live regulator guidance. Preserve dated messages and do not merge a contractual claim with a regulatory complaint.

Limits and escalation

Forum eligibility, time limits and remedies depend on the facts and documents. Obtain legal advice where the amount, limitation period or contractual interpretation is material.

If a material fact is disputed, stop before the irreversible step. Ask the controlling authority, operator or an appropriately qualified professional, and keep the reply with the working file. Do not turn an estimate, example or inference into a confirmed entitlement, deadline, price or outcome.

Continue with these LBRD guides

For the next adjacent task, read [Condo Dispute? Check the Strata Titles Boards Route First](#). A second useful route is [Why a Property Agent May Ask for Your NRIC](#). Both links point to live pages with a different primary intent.

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