

How to Become A Florida Supreme Court Certified Mediator

Step By Step Guide



In order to assist applicants, the
Dispute Resolution Center has created the following
guide which outlines the mediator certification qualifications
and application process.

Revised November 2016

Attachment A- Mediator Qualifications Florida Rules for Certified and Court-Appointed Mediators

Rule 10.100. Certification Requirements

- (a) General. For certification as a county court, family, circuit court, dependency, or appellate mediator, a mediator must be at least 21 years of age and be of good moral character. For certification as a county court, family, circuit court, or dependency mediator, one must have the required number of points for the type of certification sought as specifically required in rule 10.105.
- (b) County Court Mediators. For initial certification as a mediator of county court matters, an applicant must have at least a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and 100 points, which shall include:
 - (1) 30 points for successful completion of a Florida Supreme Court certified county court mediation training program;
 - (2) 10 points for education; and
 - (3) 60 points for mentorship.
- (c) Family Mediators. For initial certification as a mediator of family and dissolution of marriage issues, an applicant must have at least a bachelor's degree and 100 points, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - (1) 30 points for successful completion of a Florida Supreme Court certified family mediation training program;
 - (2) 25 points for education/mediation experience; and
 - (3) 30 points for mentorship.

Additional points above the minimum requirements may be awarded for completion of additional education/mediation experience, mentorship, and miscellaneous activities.

- (d) Circuit Court Mediators. For initial certification as a mediator of circuit court matters, other than family matters, an applicant must have at least a bachelor's degree and 100 points, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - (1) 30 points for successful completion of a Florida Supreme Court certified circuit mediation training program;
 - (2) 25 points for education/mediation experience; and
 - (3) 30 points for mentorship.

Additional points above the minimum requirements may be awarded for completion of additional education/mediation experience, mentorship, and miscellaneous activities.

- (e) **Dependency Mediators.** For initial certification as a mediator of dependency matters, as defined in Florida Rule of Juvenile Procedure 8.290, an applicant must have at least a bachelor's degree and 100 points, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - (1) 30 points for successful completion of a Florida Supreme Court certified dependency mediation training program;
 - (2) 25 points for education/mediation experience; and
 - (3) 40 points for mentorship.

Additional points above the minimum requirements may be awarded for completion of additional education/mediation experience, mentorship, and miscellaneous activities.

- (f) **Appellate Mediators.** For initial certification as a mediator of appellate matters, an applicant must be a Florida Supreme Court certified circuit, family or dependency mediator and successfully complete a Florida Supreme Court certified appellate mediation training program¹.
- (g) **Senior Judges Serving As Mediators.** A senior judge may serve as a mediator in a court-ordered mediation only if certified by the Florida Supreme Court as a mediator for that type of mediation.
- (h) **Referral for Discipline.** If the certification or licensure necessary for any person to be certified as a family or circuit mediator is suspended or revoked, or if the mediator holding such certification or licensure is in any other manner disciplined, such matter shall be referred to the Mediator Qualifications Board for appropriate action pursuant to rule 10.800.
- (i) **Special Conditions.** Mediators who are certified prior to August 1, 2006, shall not be subject to the point requirements for any category of certification in relation to which continuing certification is maintained.

¹ Rule 9.730, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure, regarding appointment of mediators

(a) Appointment by Agreement. Within 10 days of the court order of referral, the parties may file a stipulation with the court designating a mediator certified as an appellate mediator pursuant to rule 10.100(f), Florida Rules for Certified and Court-Appointed Mediators. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, the mediator shall be licensed to practice law in any United States jurisdiction. (b) Appointment by Court. If the parties cannot agree upon a mediator within 10 days of the order of referral, the appellant shall notify the court immediately and the court shall appoint a certified appellate mediator selected by such procedure as is designated by administrative order. The court shall appoint a certified appellate mediator who is licensed to practice law in any United States jurisdiction, unless otherwise requested upon agreement of the parties.

Rule 10.105. Point System Categories

- (a) Education. Points shall be awarded in accordance with the following schedule (points are only awarded for the highest level of education completed and honorary degrees are not included):

High School Diploma/GED	10 points
Associate's Degree	15 points
Bachelor's Degree	20 points
Master's Degree	25 points
Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution	30 points
Doctorate (e.g., Ph.D., J.D., M.D., Ed.D., LL.M)	30 points
Ph.D. from Accredited Conflict Resolution Program	40 points

An additional five points will be awarded for completion of a graduate level conflict resolution certificate program in an institution which has been accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the American Bar Association, or an entity of equal status.

- (b) Mediation Experience. One point per year will be awarded to a Florida Supreme Court certified mediator for each year that mediator has mediated at least 15 cases of any type. In the alternative, a maximum of five points will be awarded to any mediator, regardless of Florida Supreme Court certification, who has conducted a minimum of 100 mediations over a consecutive five-year period.
- (c) Mentorship. Ten points will be awarded for each supervised mediation completed of the type for which certification is sought and five points will be awarded for each mediation session of the type for which certification is sought which is observed.
- (d) Miscellaneous Points.
- (1) Five points shall be awarded to applicants currently licensed or certified in any United States jurisdiction in psychology, accounting, social work, mental health, health care, education, or the practice of law or mediation. Such award shall not exceed a total of five points regardless of the number of licenses or certifications obtained.
 - (2) Five points shall be awarded for possessing conversational ability in a foreign language as demonstrated by certification by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Test, qualification as a court interpreter, accreditation by the American Translators Association, or approval as a sign language interpreter by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Such award shall not exceed a total of five points regardless of the number of languages in which the applicant is proficient.

- (3) Five points shall be awarded for the successful completion of a mediation training program (minimum 30 hours in length) which is certified or approved by a jurisdiction other than Florida and which may not be the required Florida Supreme Court certified mediation training program. Such award shall not exceed five points regardless of the number of training programs completed.
- (4) Five points shall be awarded for certification as a mediator by the Florida Supreme Court. Such award shall not exceed five points per category regardless of the number of training programs completed or certifications obtained.

Committee Notes

The following table is intended to illustrate the point system established in this rule. Any discrepancy between the table and the written certification requirements shall be resolved in favor of the latter.

Points Needed Per Area of Certification		Minimum Points Required in Each Area
County	100	30 certified county mediation training; 10 education (minimum HS Diploma/GED); 60 mentorship
Family	100	30 certified family mediation training; 25 education/mediation experience (minimum Bachelor's Degree ²); 30 mentorship [and requires 15 additional points]
Dependency	100	30 certified dependency mediation training; 25 education/mediation experience (minimum Bachelor's Degree ³); 40 mentorship [and requires 5 additional points]
Circuit	100	30 certified circuit mediation training, 25 education/mediation experience (minimum Bachelor's Degree ⁴); 30 mentorship; [and requires 15 additional points]
Appellate		For initial certification as a mediator of appellate matters, an applicant must be a Florida Supreme Court certified circuit, family or dependency mediator and successfully complete a Florida Supreme Court certified appellate mediation training program ⁵ .

²In order to amass the 25 education/mediation experience point minimum for family, dependency or circuit court certification, one must have either:

A) a Master's Degree or higher; OR B) a Bachelor's Degree (20 points) **and** have substantial mediation experience (yielding at least 5 points) or have earned a graduate certificate in Conflict Resolution (5 points).

³ See #2 above

⁴ See #2 above

A) a Master's Degree or higher; OR B) a Bachelor's Degree (20 points) **and** have substantial mediation experience (yielding at least 5 points) or have earned a graduate certificate in Conflict Resolution (5 points).

⁵ Rule 9.730, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure, regarding appointment of mediators who are licensed to practice law (a) Appointment by Agreement. Within 10 days of the court order of referral, the parties may file a stipulation with the court designating a mediator certified as an appellate mediator pursuant to rule 10.100(f), Florida Rules for Certified and Court-Appointed Mediators. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, the mediator shall be licensed to practice law in any United States jurisdiction. (b) Appointment by Court. If the parties cannot agree upon a mediator within 10 days of the order of referral, the appellant shall notify the court immediately and the court shall appoint a certified appellate mediator selected by such procedure as is designated by administrative order. The court shall appoint a certified appellate mediator who is licensed to practice law in any United States jurisdiction, unless otherwise requested upon agreement of the parties.

Education/Mediation Experience (points awarded for highest level of education received)			
HS Diploma/GED	10 points	Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution	30
Associate's Degree	15 points	Doctorate (e.g., JD, MD, PhD, EdD, LLM)	30
Bachelor's Degree	20 points	Ph.D. from accredited CR Program	40
Master's Degree	25 points	Graduate Certificate CR Program	+5
Florida certified mediator: 1 point per year in which mediated at least 15 mediations (any type) OR any mediator: – 5 points for minimum of 100 mediations (any type) over a 5 year period			

Mentorship- must work with at least 2 different certified mediators and must be completed for the type of certification sought	
Observation	5 points each session
Supervised Mediation	10 points each complete mediation

Miscellaneous Points	
Licensed to practice law, psychology, accounting, social work, mental health, health care, education or mediation in any US jurisdiction	5 points (total)
Florida Certified Mediator	5 points (total)
Foreign Language Conversational Ability as demonstrated by certification by ACTFL Oral Proficiency Test; qualified as a court interpreter; or accredited by the American Translators Association; Sign Language Interpreter as demonstrated by approval by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf	5 points (total)
Completion of additional mediation training program (minimum 30 hours in length) certified/approved by a state or court other than Florida	5 points (total)