

## WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is a process in which an impartial third party (the mediator) assists people in conflict in finding a mutually acceptable solution to their dispute. Mediation is both voluntary and confidential.

## WHO IS PRESENT AT MEDIATION?

Most commonly, the parties involved in the family law situation and the mediator will be the only ones present at the mediation. At times, it may be appropriate to include additional people in the mediation such as the parties' attorneys, counselors or, in rare circumstances, the children.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN MEDIATION?

The mediator will begin the mediation by explaining the mediation process and answering any questions. The mediator will then lead a structured conversation about the issues in the case, ensuring that each participant has the opportunity to speak and to listen in a safe environment. Mediators are impartial facilitators—they do not assign blame, judge who is right or wrong, or make decisions about what should happen. The mediator's aim is to provide a collaborative environment in which parties can creatively address their needs and those of their family to arrive at solutions that are both "do-able" and "durable." Separate sessions may be held if the mediator feels that they will be helpful to the process. The initial mediation session is typically scheduled for a two-hour block of time, and further sessions can be scheduled as needed. Any agreements reached by the parties will be incorporated into a Memorandum of Agreement drafted by the mediator. The Memorandum of Agreement can then be converted into an enforceable agreement by the parties or their attorney(s).

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# FAMILY MEDIATION



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## What Issues Can Be Handled In a Family Mediation?

Family mediation can address a number of family law issues including the following:

- Child custody (legal and physical)
- Parenting time (visitation)
- Child support
- Maintenance (alimony)
- Debt/asset division
- Pre- and post-nuptial agreements
- Moves out-of-state
- Transportation issues
- Communication issues
- Post-divorce issues
- Adoption
- School-related or discipline issues
- Grandparent/third-party custody



## Why Choose Mediation?

- ✓ **Mediation Allows the Parties to Control the Outcome**  
In mediation, the parties are in control. The parties make their own decisions about what is best. The solution is determined by people who will live with the consequences. The mediators do not impose their own views or solutions.
- ✓ **Mediation is Voluntary**  
Participants mediate only if they choose to and have the option to stop at any time.
- ✓ **Mediation is Confidential**  
Sessions are held in private and mediators will not disclose what is said in a mediation session, except under very rare circumstances. No records are kept of the discussion except the agreement that is reached by the participants.
- ✓ **Mediation is Quick and Convenient**  
We can typically schedule mediations within one to two weeks of the initial inquiry at a time and place convenient to you.
- ✓ **Mediation is Cost-Effective**  
The cost of mediation (which is generally the cost of the mediator) is typically far less than what you would pay if the matter went to court.
- ✓ **Mediation is Non-Adversarial**  
In mediation, parties work together toward a solution that everyone can accept.
- ✓ **Mediation is Respectful**  
Mediation fosters respect for differences in beliefs and backgrounds. Mediation helps people to preserve and maintain ongoing relationships.
- ✓ **Mediation Works!**  
Even if you have already tried to resolve your dispute and have been unsuccessful, try mediation. It has helped many others in resolving seemingly intractable disputes.

## WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING . . .

*"Thank you so much for all your help in the mediation. You were very effective, compassionate and prepared. We certainly couldn't have done it without you!"*  
—J.W.

*"You were wonderful! Your patience and perseverance carried the day! We came to the mediation with an embarrassingly low level of expectation of success and came away euphoric."*—K.J.