



Mediation Process

Mediation is a process for resolving disputes that allows people to be heard, to find common ground, and to create a solution that works. Our mediators help clients identify, communicate, and understand all parties' needs and goals. Our process aims to build solutions that address the real issues fueling the conflict. Mediators guide the conversation and provide tools to help problem-solve. They do not make decisions or create solutions for you. This is your process; make it worth your time.

What can I expect when I attend mediation?

By agreeing to participate in mediation, you take an important step toward resolving a dispute. The goal of mediation is to reach an agreement that all participants find reasonable and in their best interests.

What happens in a mediation session?

Each party gets a chance to talk about the situation from their perspective, without interruption, sometimes in the presence of the other party and sometimes with only the mediators present. The mediator will establish ground rules and guide participants through a process of discovery and communication. Some of the techniques may be familiar, such as "brainstorming", but the mediation process itself is indeed a unique experience. The mediator is there to help the parties decide what the important issues are, explore misunderstandings, illuminate listening techniques, and discover solutions.

What happens when we find a solution?

If an agreement is reached, a written agreement will be drafted and each party will sign the agreement. You may also take your agreement to attorneys for their review.

What can mediators do?

Mediations are facilitated discussions that give you both a chance to communicate your needs, concerns and goals. Your mediators will act as impartial third-parties, listeners and conversation guides; they will not act as judges, arbitrators, or decision makers. Any decisions made in mediation will be those agreed on by YOU - the mediating parties, and may be written into an agreement you can then file through the courts, and/or take to attorneys for their review.

What can mediators NOT do?

Six Rivers staff and mediators cannot give you legal or financial advice. When possible, we strongly encourage you to get advice from qualified professionals (e.g. attorneys, financial advisors, accountants, therapists) and come to the mediation prepared to discuss your needs and ideas for how to move forward.

Is mediation confidential?

Yes, Mediation is confidential and voluntary. Any conversations Six Rivers staff and mediators have with you or the other party will remain confidential. If at any point you or your mediators feel that mediation is not benefiting the situation, the process can be stopped. The mediator(s) will keep confidential everything you say during the mediation. Prior to the mediation, you will be asked to sign a "Consent to Mediate" agreement to keep matters discussed in the mediation confidential. The mediator(s) will review the agreement with you and answer any questions you may have at that time. The agreement



explains that the mediators will not discuss matters covered in the mediation outside of the mediation, this includes requests for information from the courts.

How much time will mediation take?

Each mediation is different. Most sessions are scheduled for about 2 hours. Speak to your mediator at the beginning of the session about taking breaks when needed. Sometimes it is necessary to schedule a follow up session.

How many mediators will be present?

Six Rivers uses a co-mediation model; there will generally be a team of two mediators. Sometimes new mediators observe.

What are the costs?

In general, mediations are \$175 per session, per party, and we offer a sliding scale for those with incomes below \$60K and can also waive fees for those facing extreme financial hardship. **Each party is invoiced separately. We require either full payment or a Fee Waiver Application up front, prior to the mediation session. Please see our full Fee Schedule and Sliding Scale for more information. Some mediations are free, depending upon the program/funding source.**

Ok, I am interested in proceeding! What is the next step?

We offer a free phone consultation to answer questions, assess whether mediation would be the right fit for your situation, or to prepare for mediation. If it hasn't occurred already, one of our mediators will contact you soon to get more details and see if you and the other party want to move ahead with mediation.

Updated March 2022