



Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center: Annual Report 2022

We help people in our community peacefully resolve disputes themselves.

In 2022, Six Rivers continued providing services to community members in our service area: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties in Oregon, and Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington. We provided services virtually, in-person and via phone to support people with resolving and addressing conflicts, including parenting plans, divorces, organizational and business disputes, neighborhood conflicts, landlord/tenant and housing disputes, and conflicts within the agricultural sector.

"I did not want to traverse through the legal system that discloses our lives publicly, financially and relationally, pitting one against the other. It's emotionally difficult as it is, but we accomplished our solution with respect, honor, and with an agreed resolution. Thank you!" – 2022 Mediation Client

- **90%** of clients felt respected by Six Rivers staff and mediators throughout the entire process.
- **96%** of clients felt that the mediation process was fair.
- After participating in mediation, **89%** felt confident they could handle a similar conflict in the future.
- Of cases that went to mediation, **73%** resulted in an agreement.

2022 Accomplishments:

- Provided conflict resolution services for a total of **235** closed cases - including providing people with information and referral to other services, conciliations, conflict coaching, mediations and group facilitations.
- Helped over **600** people directly with a Six Rivers service and served over **1,100** people.

"I thought [the training] was remarkable. Understanding how to navigate and help people navigate their issues in a peaceful way is such a profound ability, especially in this deeply divided age." – 2022 Basic Mediation Training participant

- **155** sessions (Mediation, Facilitation, Conflict Coaching, Conciliation)
- Trained **14** local community members in our 40-hour Basic Mediation Training, which we offered in both the spring and fall.
- Offered **15** mediator continuing education sessions.
- Provided two housing mediation programs that offer free conflict resolution services to landlords and tenants: 1) Year 2 of Washington State's Eviction Resolution Pilot Program and; 2) Year 1 of the Eviction Prevention Mediation Program in Oregon.

- Launched a brand-new restorative justice program in collaboration with local system partners. Established a partnership with the New York University Center on Violence and Recovery for consulting and training services.
- Implemented a paid mediation apprenticeship program, in which two conflict resolution practitioners receive hands on, on-the-job training.
- Continue as Oregon's Certified Agricultural Mediation Program, providing subsidized conflict resolution services to farmers and anyone involved in Oregon agriculture.
- Launched a partnership to provide training and conflict resolution services to a local school district.
- Trained over **100** rural, Pacific Northwest community leaders in active listening skills at the Rural Development Initiative conference.
- We tracked over **330** volunteer hours between our volunteer mediators and volunteer trainers.

"I am very grateful for this service and relieved to find it available during this difficult time in our society. [Mediators] were very complete, professional and "human" during the whole process." – 2022 Mediation Client

Staff Reflections and Highlights from 2022 – A year of Growth for Six Rivers!

Andrea Pacheco, Executive Director

The past year was one of risk and reward as we put our name in the hat for 3 program opportunities to reach more community members, including a demonstration project for Eviction Prevention Mediation in Oregon, an Oregon Restorative Justice Program design with criminal justice system and community service partners, and an Apprenticeship program for mediation and restorative justice. We have our work cut out for us to ensure these programs mature past their infancy stage, and we have the right people to do it!

Lori Loranger, Services Coordinator

The shining star that lit up the sky for me was the acquisition of additional space in Hood River to include circle space, capacity for shuttle mediation and revamping the mediation/conference room for in person and hybrid meetings. We now have office space that includes breathing space, even if all of us are there at the same time working.

Colleen Regalbuto, Program Manager

It is incredible to me that Six Rivers has gone from having two staff members two years ago, to now having eight talented, dedicated staff members, all of whom bring a variety of experiences and knowledge to our work. I am also so grateful to our founder, Marti Dane, and board member, Ruth Berkowitz, for providing many hours of support and expertise to our Basic Mediation Trainings, which we are now offering twice a year.

Debra Pennington Davis, Restorative Justice Coordinator

My highlight of the year was receiving a grant from the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to build a survivor-centered pre-charge restorative justice program here in the Gorge. We're collaborating with system and community partners, victim advocates, and service providers to build effective, research-supported options for survivors and impacted community members--options that promote healing, meaningful accountability, and increased safety.

Andy Oliver, Restorative Justice Apprentice

It has been a delight to be the first Restorative Justice Apprentice for Six Rivers. A highlight for me includes learning how a new restorative justice program is built from scratch. Watching and participating in developing partnerships with other organizations and people like social service providers, government officials, tribal members, the academic community and more, has been a tremendous benefit for me.

Ona Lawrence, Washington Early Resolution Specialist

Last year saw the opening of Six Rivers Goldendale Office. We found the perfect spot right on Main Street with easy access. Having a physical location on the Washington Side has helped Six Rivers expand services to both Skamania and Klickitat Counties. Being part of the Goldendale Community has given Six Rivers greater visibility in the more rural areas of Klickitat and Skamania Counties.

Michael Reid, Oregon Early Resolution Specialist

The highlights of the new housing mediation program for Oregon in 2022 included an effective outreach program at Oregon courthouses, where judges and court staff now provide introductions to the services provided by Six Rivers (mediation was offered and often undertaken in courtrooms during eviction hearings!), and proactive networking with area assistance programs that helped landlords to receive back rent and tenants to keep their housing. Clients who are happy with housing mediation at Six Rivers include landlords who mediated the removal of an abusive tenant, a resident in an assisted living facility who mediated the correction of an erroneous write-up that had mis-identified her, and a tenant who worked with Six Rivers and a local assistance program simultaneously and then was able to pay her back rent and stay housed just before her eviction hearing commenced.

Carolyn R. Smale, Mediation Apprentice

I am so excited to be the first Mediation Apprentice with Six Rivers. I get to immerse myself in community dispute resolution and spend 20 hours a week doing all things mediation with fellow mediators while building lasting relationships. I sincerely hope that Six Rivers receives funding and can offer this program again. I encourage anyone who is thinking about a career in conflict resolution to look for this position in the future.