



## **Basic Mediation Training- FAQs**

At Six Rivers, our mission is, *"to empower and train people and organizations to resolve conflict through mediation, facilitation, restorative justice and other collaborative means of communication."*

As a way to contribute to this mission, we offer our 40 hour Basic Mediation Training (BMT), to the community twice a year- in the spring and fall. Training more local people in conflict resolution helps us contribute to our vision of *"a community equipped with the skills to resolve conflict in a healthy, civil and peaceful way."*

Our team often get lots of questions about Basic Mediation Training; here are a few of the most common ones:

### ***What if I don't think I want to become a formal mediator? Will the training still be useful?***

Yes! Although some people who take the training plan do plan to become "formal" mediators- either in private practice, as court-connected mediators, or as certified volunteer dispute resolution center mediators- many people who take the training never actually become "formal" mediators. However, they do use the listening and conflict resolution skills they learn in the training at home, at work, at school, and in their communities. The skills taught in Basic Mediation Training are easily transferable and designed to improve communication and enhance relationships in all settings. Many trainees reach out to us after the training to let us know how useful the training has been to them. As one example, a recent graduate of the training told us: *"I feel that I have gained a valuable life skill and a new awareness in navigating conflict."*

### ***How is the training structured?***

The training is a mix of interactive small group activities, lectures and role plays. Trainees participate in about 7 role plays of the mediation process - trainees take turns playing the part of the mediator and a person in a conflict, with a mediation coach present to help guide and support the role players. The training meets all requirements of mediation trainings per Oregon and Washington standards. We generally provide 5 full days of training (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, with a one-hour lunch), to meet the 36-40 hours of required training time. We usually limit the training to 12 participants maximum, in order to allow everyone to get lots of experience role-playing. Everyone who takes the training receives a copy of the book *The Mediator's Handbook*, and a binder full of course materials to take home.

### ***Who are the trainers?***

We are very fortunate that Six Rivers' founder, former executive director, and longtime mediator, Marti Dane, often returns to our center to help give the training. In addition, former Six Rivers board member, attorney, author and longtime mediator Ruth Berkowitz, often team-teaches the training. Six Rivers program manager Colleen Regalbutto coordinates and team-



teaches the training, and various members of the Six Rivers team join the training to help with various modules and to coach mediation role plays. One benefit of the training is that trainees get to learn from a variety of mediators with different mediation styles. One recent trainee remarked, *"I found it incredibly valuable to have the opportunity to learn from and meet a variety of practitioners in the field. What a gift to be able to learn from such a caring and well-seasoned group of people! The wealth of perspectives, expertise and life experience that each person brought to the table created a fascinating and well-rounded training."*

***How do you keep the cost so affordable?***

In recent years, we have been able to provide one of the most affordable mediation trainings in the Pacific Northwest to our Gorge community, with the heavily subsidized rate of \$250/person. (We also offer scholarships to those facing financial hardship, students, Spanish-speakers and people who will use the skills learned in the training to serve traditionally underserved local communities. There is a scholarship application process.) We are delighted to be able to offer the training at such an affordable rate, as it actually costs us about \$850 to train one person. We are able to offer the training to our Gorge community at such a discounted rate thanks to grants we receive from funders such as the United Way of the Columbia Gorge. We see offering an affordable training as a key part of our mission.

***Can I get more information about career paths in mediation, mediator certification, volunteer opportunities with Six Rivers and further training?***

We encourage you to check out our training page for more info: <https://6rivers.org/training/>. There are links throughout this page with more information on these topics. Also, at this time, everyone who takes Basic Mediation Training with us receives a one year free membership in the Oregon Mediation Association and is eligible to attend Six Rivers' free monthly Mediator Guild training/discussion sessions. You can also reach out to Six Rivers if you have further questions.

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