

Minimum Standards for Certification via a DRC Practicum Program **Adopted by the Membership of Resolution Washington on December 1, 2011**

Prerequisite: Completion of a 36-40 hour Basic Mediation Training.

1. **Entry into Practicum:** Includes entry exercise/exam, application form, and continued thorough record keeping by DRC and intern throughout intern's history.
 - Best Practices: The DRC may include an interview/orientation as part of the application process. (Some DRCs use the exercise/exam to review answers with intern during this interview/orientation).
2. **Minimum Observations** (Observation hours may include 30 minutes for set up and 30 minutes for debrief.): Minimum of 20 hours of time allocated to observations and/or mocks. At least 14 hours must be in observations of at least 3 completed cases. The other 6 hours can be allocated to mocks or more observation of actual mediations.
 - Best Practices: Minimum of 20 hours of time allocated to observations of live cases.
3. **Minimum Mediations** (Mediation hours may include 30 minutes for set up and 30 minutes for debrief.): A minimum of 24 hours of actual experience in the role of mediator or co-mediator in at least 4 separate and completed cases. These cases may include small claims mediation cases with appropriate supervision. Evaluation forms should be used for all co-mediations. The co-mediation form is filled out in part by the mentor mediator, who at a minimum is a certified and experienced mediator. The remainder is filled out by the intern.
4. **Solo Mock:** 1 solo mock proctored by a DRC staff or certification committee member – can be anytime after observation.
 - Best Practices: 1 solo mock to be completed after the intern's observations and 1 solo mock to be completed after the intern's has completed 24 hours of co-mediating. Both mocks are to be proctored by a DRC staff or certification committee member.
5. **Additional Practicum Education:** A minimum of 12 hours of additional education during the practicum that might include, but is not limited to:
 - a. In-services
 - b. Conference attendance
 - c. Seminars
 - d. Book review/article review
 - e. Role playing & debriefing (mocks/demonstrations)
 - f. Peer consultation
 - g. "What ifs?"
6. **Intern Engagement:** It is the responsibility of the intern to stay engaged and remain active throughout the course of the practicum and the DRCs responsibility to provide opportunities to learn and encouragement for consistent involvement.

7. **Decision to Certify:** Prior to certification after all of the above have been fulfilled, it is recommended that the DRC implement a defined process that is used in every case to certify mediators. At a minimum the decision to certify would include assessing the interns ability to meet the 18 skills** for competent performance as a mediator, as approved by Resolution Washington in 1999. The process of certification may also include, but is not limited to:
- a. Interview with intern
 - b. Written self-evaluation by intern
 - c. Feedback by mentors (to DRC point person overseeing the Certification process)
 - d. Review of intern's files
 - e. Write up a final narrative recommendation
- Best Practices: A team approach with consensus reached among all members of the certification committee/team as to whether to certify an intern.

That an intern may meet minimum requirements does not necessarily mean the DRC is mandated to certify intern. The DRC should do so only if they feel the intern is ready for certification.

**** 18 skills for competent performance as a mediator, as approved by Resolution Washington in 1999**

1. Ability to listen actively;
2. Ability to analyze problems, identify and separate the issues involved, and frame these issues for resolution of decision making;
3. Ability to use clear, neutral language in speaking and writing;
4. Ability to be sensitive to strongly felt values of the disputants, including gender, ethnic, and cultural differences;
5. Ability to deal with complex factual materials;
6. Ability to create and maintain control of a diverse group of individuals;
7. Ability to identify and to separate the neutral's personal values from issues under consideration;
8. Ability to understand and redress power imbalances
9. Ability to understand the negotiation process and the role of advocacy,
10. Ability to earn trust and maintain acceptability;
11. Ability to convert parties' position into needs and interests;
12. Ability to screen out non-mediatable issues;
13. Ability to help parties invent creative options;
14. Ability to help the parties identify principles and criteria that will guide them in decision making;
15. Ability to help parties assess their non-settlement alternatives;
16. Ability to help the parties make their own informed choices;
17. Ability to help parties assess whether their agreement can be implemented; and
18. Ability to identify when expert outside information is needed by the parties.

Definitions of Common DRC Terms

Active/Inactive: Active: continues to be engaged on a regular basis as defined by each center.
Inactive: is no longer engaged on a continuing regular basis as defined by each center.

Certification: Recognition of successful completion of Practicum qualifying an individual to mediate with the DRC issuing the certification.

Continuing Education: Additional training/education that is completed by a certified mediator to remain current and up to date in the field.

Ethics/Standards: Standards are those basic practices all mediators are asked to support and adhere to. Ethics are the written and possibly unwritten moral requirements under which we operate. “Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators” are as set and adopted by the American Arbitration Association, American Bar Association and the Association for Conflict Resolution.

Intake/Case Management: Intake /case management includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Initial contact with clients seeking services.
2. Contact with all parties to determine willingness to participate and appropriateness of case for mediation.
3. Scheduling first session and collection of any fees that may be required prior to session.

4. Final disposition of the case. Which may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. tracking progress of case
 - b. conducting follow up where necessary
 - c. filing documents in office
 - d. recording statistics on computer
 - e. rescheduling sessions
 - f. confirmation with all parties
 - g. closing the file

Intern (Practicum Intern): A person trained in Basic Mediation who has been “accepted” into a program working toward certification as a mediator. (Suggestion to use “student” or “practicum participant” instead.)

Mediator Practitioner: A practicing mediator who has been certified by a DRC.

Mediator Style vs. Standards: Standards are those basic practices all mediators are asked to support and adhere to. Style is the manner of each mediator personality in which that is accomplished.

Mentor Mediator/Senior Mediator: A mediator meeting the following minimum qualifications:

- Basic Certification by a DRC.
- Trained and experienced in the specialized area of mediation being mentored (i.e. Family Law, VOM, Workplace, etc.)
- Proficient in his or her craft.
- Adheres to WMA Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators.
- 24 hours minimum additional continuing education hours (exclusive of Family Training and VOM Training).
- Additional qualities beneficial for a mentor mediation practitioner to possess and utilize are:
 - Ability to create a positive mentor relationship.
 - Ability to give and receive constructive feedback.
 - Flexibility to work with a variety of different mediator styles, skill levels, and personalities.
 - Patience.

Practicum: The program an intern completes to become a certified mediator practitioner. The practicum involves additional training, observing and co-mediating cases.

Trainee: A person who has completed Basic Mediation Training.