

# What is Mediation?

Mediation is a process of dispute resolution in which one or more impartial third parties intervene(s) in a conflict with the consent of the disputants and assists them in negotiating a consensual and informed agreement. In mediation, the decision-making process rests with the parties themselves. Recognizing variations in styles and cultural differences, the role of the mediator(s) involves assisting the disputants in defining and clarifying issues, reducing obstacles to communication, exploring possible solutions, and reaching a mutually satisfactory agreement. Mediation provides the opportunity to peacefully express conflict and to “hear each other out,” even when an agreement is not reached.

(Definition provided courtesy of the National Association for Community Mediation)

## HOW MEDIATION WORKS

**Voluntary** — Either party can leave at any time.

**Balanced** — Mediators do not take sides.

**Confidential** — Participants agree to keep the discussions private.

**Constructive** — Mediators create a safe environment that encourages constructive discussion.

**Flexible** — Can be scheduled during the day, evenings or on weekends.

## BENEFITS

**You** determine an acceptable solution.

**Future-oriented:** focuses on immediate and long-term solutions.

**Respects relationships:** between parties by encouraging better communication.

**Affordable:** services are either free or based on income.

**Higher compliance rates** than decisions made by courts.

**Higher satisfaction** because you shape the outcome.

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Table of Contents

