

What is Family Mediation?



What is Mediation? Mediation is a practical, affordable and confidential process to address conflicts within a family. In mediation, both sides try to resolve their differences with the help of a neutral mediator.

Why Mediation?

- Mediation saves money.
- Mediation is quicker compared to a court action.
- Mediation is an alternative to going to court that is more private and less stressful than court.
- Mediation can produce settlement agreements which are enforceable.

What is Family Mediation? Family mediation helps parents to make important decisions when experiencing separation or divorce. Family mediation helps parents make decisions that are in the best interests of the children.

Who can help me with family mediation? Family Justice Counselors and Mediate BC can help you make important decisions when experiencing separation or divorce.

Who are Family Justice Counsellors? Family Justice Counsellors (FJCs) are professionally trained to help parents resolve differences relating to parenting time and child support.

When do I need to talk to a Family Justice Counsellor? You may wish to talk to an FJC if you need to sort out parental responsibilities, such as: who the child will live with, when they will see each parent and how much child support will be paid. Services provided are free of charge and confidential to parents and other family members.

How do I contact an FJC? Call Enquiry BC at 604-660-2421. Ask about a Family Justice Centre near you. Online, go to www.Clicklaw.bc.ca and search Family Justice Centres.

What is Mediate BC? Mediate BC is a not-for-profit society that provides practical and affordable choices to prevent, manage and resolve disputes. The Family Law Act requires family mediators to be qualified to conduct mediation in BC. MediateBC.com has a directory of qualified family mediators.

How much does mediation cost and who pays? Most mediators charge by the hour or use daily rates. Mediation is less expensive and often faster than going to court.

How do I contact Mediate BC?

Call: 604-681-6050 | 1-800-713-0433. Go to www.MediateBC.com.

How should I prepare before I meet a family mediator?

- You should learn the basic rules of mediation.
- In mediation, you will benefit by being well prepared, polite and honest.
- Spend time before the meeting to write down your needs and objectives so that you can communicate them clearly. What are the most important things to you?
- Spend time thinking about the other person's needs. What are the most important things for this person?
- Be prepared to negotiate and compromise. Consider creative solutions to prevent frustration and disagreement.
 - Be prepared to back up your position with clear explanations and reasons.
 - Be prepared to explain your reason for disagreeing with proposals made by the other side. Be prepared to make your own proposals for a positive solution.
 - Understand that both sides will need to give up something and that the agreement needs to be fair for both sides.
- You should also bring the following documents to your meeting:
 - A written summary of your current parenting arrangements.
 - Court Orders and / or dates
 - Written agreements
 - Income statements / Personal tax assessments
 - Investments / debt and banking information
 - Property assessments
 - Your lawyer's name and phone number (if you have one);
- Make childcare arrangements for your children. Please do not bring them with you to the meeting.

What if I don't speak or understand English?

If needed, you should arrange for an interpreter to be there. This can be a friend, family member or contact the Society of Translators & Interpreters of BC: 604-684-2940 or www.STIBC.org.