



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

MEDIATION INFORMATION SHEET

1. What is Mediation?

- An opportunity to discuss your case and resolve it without a public trial. A trained mediator will help all parties try to reach a fair settlement agreement.

2. Who are the Mediators?

- Community Action Partnership's Mediators are volunteers who are trained and certified in conflict resolution and mediation.

3. What do the Mediators do?

- Mediators ask questions about your case and what is important to you; help everyone understand the strengths and weaknesses of their case; and record an agreement that is fair to both parties.
- Mediators do not give legal advice.
- Mediators do not decide who wins/loses the case.

4. Will the Mediator discuss my case or the mediation with anyone?

- No, Mediators do not share any information about the case to anyone. All mediation sessions are confidential.

5. Why should I try Mediation?

At Trial:

- The judge controls the outcome. He or she may not see the facts and evidence your way. You could lose, win, or win less than you want.
- You may only get a few minutes to present your case. The judge may not let you present all your evidence.

In Mediation:

- The parties control the result. You may not get 100% of what you want, but you can try to reach a fair compromise and avoid the risk of losing 100% at trial.
- There is more time for each side to tell the whole story, including facts and evidence that the judge would consider irrelevant or not admissible.

- **Settlement agreements vs. judges' decisions:** People are usually more likely to keep agreements that they themselves help create.
- **Credit reports:** You may be able to protect your credit even if you agree to pay money.

6. When should parties not go to mediation?

- If one party has physically or emotionally abused the other party.
- If you want your “day in court” to present your case in a public trial.

7. How long will the mediation last?

- About 30 – 60 minutes, depending on the situation.

8. What if we reach an agreement but one side violates it?

- You are able to request a new community mediation case or take your case to court.

9. When does mediation take place?

- The Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) will work with both parties to schedule a mediation session at a convenient place and time.

10. How much does mediation cost?

- The mediation service is only \$25 (\$75 if attorney is involved). Please make checks and money orders payable to Community Action Partnership of Riverside County.

11. How can I prepare for the mediation?

- Think about these things:
 - What are some ways to resolve the dispute that would work for everyone?
 - What are the most important points to tell the mediator about your case?
 - What questions do you want to ask the other party?
 - Are there any weaknesses in your case? (Facts, evidence, proof, witnesses, law?)
 - Bring any items you would like to share including documents, pictures and letters.
 - Mediation focuses on solving the problem in a practical, realistic way rather than proving who’s right or wrong. Can you help solve the problem?
 - Hostile tactics don’t work in mediation. Courtesy, respect, listening and keeping an open mind do work. People often “agree to disagree” on certain points to reach a deal. Can you try to understand your opponent even if you don’t agree with him/her? Many people are pleasantly surprised at the agreements they reach in mediation.

For more information, please contact:

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