

MEDIATION CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

Mediation is a process where an impartial mediator helps parents attempt to reach an agreement. The purpose of mediation is to assist parents in developing a responsible parenting plan.

Family Services of the Conciliation Court conducts mediation according to the following guidelines:

1. **Confidentiality**

Communications in mediation shall be confidential and the mediator shall not disclose any communication to the Court or anyone else. However, there are certain matters which by law are not confidential and may be disclosed. These matters which are not privileged include child abuse and threatened or actual violence.

2. **Participation and disclosure**

Parties are expected to communicate openly, to share all information pertinent to the issues, and to complete assignments as directed by the mediator.

3. **Legal advice**

The mediator cannot provide legal advice to either party. If the need for legal advice arises during mediation, the parties will be encouraged to discuss those issues with an attorney.

4. **Individual Meetings**

Sometimes the process of mediation is helped by meeting individually with a party. If this should arise in your mediation, individual meetings will be fully discussed and will take place as necessary and in the best interest of the mediation process.

Between scheduled appointments, the mediator will not discuss mediation issues with either party.

5. **Session Attendance**

Parties are expected to attend all mediation sessions scheduled by the mediator.

6. **Best Interests of the Child(ren)**

If the mediator believes that the parents are not representing the best interests of the children during mediation, then the mediator has the responsibility to inform the parties, and suspend or terminate the mediation process if necessary.

7. **Notification of Settlement Outside Mediation**

The parties or their attorneys will immediately inform the mediator of any settlement reached.

8. **Reporting Outcome of Mediation**

If mediation is successful, the mediator will prepare a written parenting plan that will state the terms of the agreement. The Parenting Plan will be given to the parties and their attorneys.

If an agreement is reached through mediation, that agreement may be submitted to the Court, after an objection period, for approval and, if approved, made an order of the Court.

If mediation is not successful, the mediator will inform the Court and attorneys in writing that no agreement was reached.

I agree to use my best efforts to participate fully in the mediation process in accordance with these conference guidelines.

I acknowledge that I have read and that I understand the Mediation Conference Guidelines.

(Print Name)

(Sign Name)

(Date)