

Mediation Session

How do I prepare?

Be prepared to agree to the following ground rules:

- Speak respectfully to each other
- Listen to others viewpoints
- Listen without interrupting
- Allow the mediator to guide the communication
- Ask if you don't understand something.

Preparing to Mediate:

- Dress for court
- Arrive early so the mediator can review the process with you and you can talk with your attorney
- Write down your questions and concerns ahead of time
- Turn off your cell phone



P I N A L • C O U N T Y

Wide open opportunity

The mission of the Child Protection Mediation is to serve families and parties, by providing opportunities to share information respectfully, to have a voice, and to promote mutual agreements through supportive court services in order to reach timely permanency in the best interest of the child.

There is no fee for mediation service.



Stephanie Lewis-Smale
Dependency Mediator
Office: 520.866.4423

Pinal County Juvenile Court Services
Dependency Unit
971 N. Jason Lopez Circle, Bldg D,
#500
P.O. Box 1009
Florence, AZ 85132

Child Protection Mediation

*Helping participants communicate
and share views in a
respectful and safe environment.*



Pinal County
Superior Court

Juvenile Court Services
Dependency Unit

MEDIATION:

What Is It?

- Voluntary agreement to participate
- Confidential: what is discussed is not repeated without agreement of the parties
- Held if the parties agree
- Ordered by the Judge or can be referred
- Focuses on issues specific to the permanency and well-being of the children in the case
- Will usually last up to ninety (90) minutes



Who Is the mediator?

The mediator is trained to guide the communication in order to help the parties talk about disagreements related to the safety, permanency and well-being of the children in the case with the hopes of reaching answers all parties can agree to.

The mediator does not take sides or make decisions in the case. The mediator will draft a written agreement if reached in the session.

The agreement is presented to the Judge in the hearing.

Who attends mediation?

There are the main parties that attend based on who the Judge has ordered to be present.

- Parents
- Children in the case, unless it isn't appropriate
- Attorney's for parents
- Attorney for children
- Department of Child Safety Case Manager
- Assistant Attorney General

Others who may participate:

- CASA, child advocate
- Relative caring for the children
- Foster Parents
- Professionals working with the family or children



What Issues May be Addressed in mediation?

Issues that may be considered for mediation include but are not limited to:

- Contents of the Petition
- Whether or not the child is “dependent”
- Tasks and services offered by DCS
- Completing tasks and services offered
- Where the child should live
- Visitation
- Disagreements with others involved in the case
- Dismissal of “dependency”
- “Terminating Parental Rights”
- “Adoption or Permanent Guardianship”