

Mediation

Mediation involves working with a third party (a mediator) to work through issues or concerns that are making it difficult to reach a resolution. A mediator is a trained professional who remains completely impartial and meetings are confidential. Their goal is to facilitate separated couples in reaching an amicable agreement. At times, emotions and past experience can affect how people deal with or view a situation so a mediator can help the individuals negotiate their feelings so they can reach a mutually satisfactory resolution.

Mediators are highly skilled in working with individuals, families and organisations in conflict situations. Their goal is to be impartial and help everyone to reach an agreement or compromise that works for all involved. A family law mediator will have the best interest of the child in mind during this process. If you are seeking family mediation it is wise to check that the mediator is qualified in this area.

What can be discussed at mediation?

Mediation is a place to work through any issues getting in the way of progress. It can help in the resolution of matters such as access, guardianship, sharing parenting, maintenance agreements, a family home, separation and divorce or other specific concerns that need to be addressed and resolved by those concerned.

Mediation requires both parties to be open and honest, declaring their assets and any relevant information which will help lead to a fair and agreeable resolution. In order to be successful mediation needs to be entered into in the spirit of fairness and wanting to have the matter resolved amicably.

How effective is mediation?

Once both parties are willing to negotiate and enter into the process in good faith then mediation can be an effective form for resolving issues where they may be disagreement. As the discussion is non-adversarial and concerned with the best interest of the children mediation can be a successful process.

Mediation will not work if there is an abuse of power or if one partner is not willing to reach an agreement.

How can mediation be arranged?

The [Legal Aid Board](#) offers a free [Family Mediation Service](#) in several locations around the country.

In order to access mediation both parties must contact the Family Mediation Service office, independently, to express their interest in taking part in the process. The mediator will meet with both parties together and may briefly meet with you

8 Coke Lane, Dublin 7
Tel: 01 662 9212
Email: info@onefamily.ie
www.onefamily.ie



individually also. The number of sessions may vary depending on the process and the issues for discussion.

There is also the option of private mediation where you may source a mediator and cover the costs yourself. If you are seeking a mediator privately then you can do this through the [Mediators' Institute of Ireland](#). Not all mediators are trained in family mediation so you may want to ensure that the person you contact is a professionally qualified family mediator.

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