

Family Mediation Services

Mediation provides a structured step-by-step process in that ensures everyone is heard fairly and new solutions can be found to grid-locked problems. The information here is designed to help you understand and prepare for family mediation.

Family conflicts are undoubtedly upsetting - sometimes they have quite a bit of history behind them. When family members are stuck in conflict it is predictable that they will each have a different perspective about the issues involved. They also may see different solutions and outcomes.

Constructive family relationships are vital to our wellbeing. So, it is important to find ways to repair relationships to move forwards and find shared agreements that look after your relationships in the future.

We all need to learn more about how have difficult conversations in a respectful and compassionate way to help to increase understanding and heal past pains. Many people say they learnt a lot more about what really works to resolve conflicts and have a better understanding of how they can make a positive difference in their family through participating in mediation

The goal in mediation is to develop a shared agreement about the positive steps each person can take to resolve these differences. It is often best if this is a written agreement in your own words.

Other Dispute Resolution Services

Sometimes family mediation is not the appropriate approach to resolve family disputes.

- **Conflict Skills Coaching** provides a supportive learning approach when you need to improve your knowledge and understanding of complex conflict situations to manage difficult people or difficult circumstances.
- **Structed Family Therapy** can be a suitable approach when parties need an alternative arrangement.

I can discuss these options with you as required.

My Role as a Mediator

My role is to be an independent and neutral facilitator of a structured process that brings the important issues to light and help people find their own unique and workable solutions to their problems.

It is my responsibility job to create a safe environment to have difficult conversations in a respectful way that reduces the risk of blame and fault-finding and escalating tensions or arguments.

To ensure a balanced discussion of issues and carefully considered exploration of the positive next steps forward for all.

I will not give advice, directions, take sides or impose a decision. I can offer help with process (how to do things), options (does this help?), and outcomes (what might be consequences?).

I follow national standards for facilitated mediation and I am accountable for these standards.

The Mediation Process

The First Step – Individual Meetings

I meet with each person individually and confidentially to ensure that mediation is the most suitable process for resolution of the disagreements for the benefit of all involved. I will introduce and explain the mediation process and answer any questions. My focus is to assist you prepare and be successful in the mediation process.

These individual meetings are 90 minutes and can be done online or at my office.

I will invite you to explore:

- Your understanding of important issues and concerns about the conflict
- What you understand about other's views about the conflict
- Your perspective on the issues contributing to the conflict
- If involving support people is desirable
- Any concerns about negotiating outcomes with other family members

It is best practice to try to promptly hold the mediation meeting after the individual meetings.

The Mediation Meeting

If all agree to proceed, there is an agreement everyone signs to meet for facilitate mediation. At the beginning of the mediation process I will lead a balanced discussion of issues to create an agenda for the mediation. As this discussion progresses, the structure can become more flexible.

There are planned individual breaks during the mediation to ensure I can confidentially check in with all participants about how the process is going for them. If needed, participants can ask to speak with me privately during the meeting about any concerns.

Most successful mediations conclude with a workable written agreement about the next steps to be taken by those involved to resolve the issues of concern and restore family relationships. These are decided during the mediation, usually written in people's own words. These are not legally binding and can't be used in future legal proceedings.

After Mediation Follow-Up

I will arrange a suitable time with all participants to follow up how the shared agreement is working and to help you explore and resolve any obstacles that are impacting the working agreement.

Fees

Fees are **\$250 per hour (exclusive of GST)**.

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