



Mediation at Community Justice Centres

What do Community Justice Centres do?

Community Justice Centres (CJCs) provide mediation and conflict management services to help people resolve their own disputes. Our service is **FREE**, **voluntary**, timely and easy to use.

What is mediation?

Mediation sessions at CJCs are conducted by two impartial, trained mediators who help people to understand each other's point of view and to work together to reach agreement acceptable to both parties.

What happens in mediation?

The mediators' role is to facilitate discussion so that people can reach their own common sense solution to their dispute.

The process typically takes between 2 and 4 hours and generally follows these steps:

- Mediators and the people involved introduce themselves and mediators explain the process and "ground rules" for the mediation.
- Each person in turn outlines their concerns and each person is listened to without interruption.
- Mediators encourage and facilitate discussion between the people on issues they have identified.
- Mediators see each person privately, while the other has time to think about their options.
- All participants are then brought back together and encouraged to negotiate future arrangements.
- If all agree, Mediators write up an agreement and give a copy to each person as a record of what was decided.

Why mediate?

Mediation provides a safe and informal environment for people to talk to each other to sort out problems.

Over 80% of mediations result in an agreement being reached. People are more committed to the outcome because they take part in the decision making.

Even if agreement cannot be reached there has been the opportunity to clarify the issues and understand each other's point of view.

What disputes are suitable for mediation?

A wide range of disputes are suitable for mediation including:

- neighbours
- families
- business
- civil and small claims matters
- workplace
- incorporated associations
- between and within communities

If you're not sure, please contact our staff.

When and where are the mediations held?

There are no waiting lists. Mediation sessions are arranged at times that suit everyone and are held at our offices or a place near you.

Who can come to a mediation?

All people involved must agree on who is attending the mediation before the session is held.

All people involved in the dispute should be encouraged to attend and participate.

People who are involved in making decisions should attend.

"Support people" may attend if required, though they do not participate in the session.

Witnesses are not necessary as the mediators are not there to assess the situation and make decisions.

We ask that you **do not** bring children to mediation.

Can my lawyer attend?

Lawyers and solicitors are not required as mediation is not a legal process, people involved should seek legal advice before mediation if necessary.

Is the agreement legally binding?

Agreements are made by both parties in "good faith". CJCs cannot enforce agreements which have been reached at mediation.