

"From Parents to Co-Parents"

Parenting Mediation Process

As a mediator, I am a neutral person. My role is to facilitate your discussions and help you decide how your dispute should be resolved. I have no power or authority to impose a solution.

After the initial referral and brief introductory telephone conversation, my first step is to meet with both parties separately in what we refer to as an intake meeting.

INTAKE MEETINGS

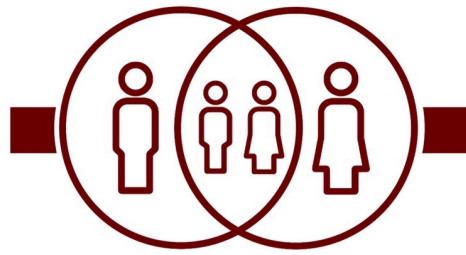
Intake meetings are confidential. They provide each client with the opportunity to provide me with background information from their individual perspectives, without fear of criticism, judgment or conflict.

Before the intake meeting, to help facilitate our discussion I will send each of you a Confidential Questionnaire that I ask you to complete. The questionnaire helps to direct my questions during the intake session and it allows me more time to assess your needs and the nature of the conflicts between parties.

During the intake meeting, I will explain the different types of agreements which may be appropriate, the various ways in which the mediation process may unfold, who may be involved in the process and what will be required in order for each of you to successfully negotiate an appropriate resolution of the issues you wish to address.

During the intake you are also free to ask questions about me, the mediation process itself, how I might handle specific situations which may occur during the mediation process and raise specific concerns about the other person, their ability to participate in a meaningful way or potential outcomes. You are also free to share your views about how you would like specific issues to be resolved. Most people feel much calmer and more confident in their ability to participate in mediation in a meaningful way after their intake meetings.

OTTAWA CO-PARENTING SOLUTIONS



"From Parents to Co-Parents"

Intake meetings provide me with a unique opportunity to gather information, both directly and indirectly. Having the opportunity to observe behaviour is often as valuable to me as the information that is communicated to me verbally.

SCHEDULING YOUR MEDIATION SESSIONS

Immediately after you have completed your intake process, if it has been decided to go ahead and the contract is signed, we will send you a list of available mediation dates so that we can schedule the number of sessions we estimate you will need to complete your discussions.

WHO ATTENDS THE MEDIATION?

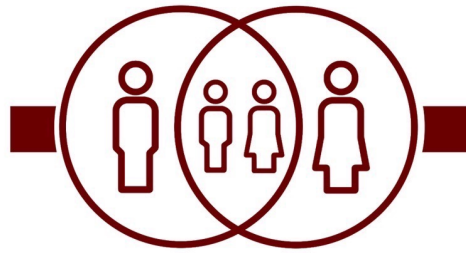
Some clients attend mediation sessions on their own. They are confident that they have the capacity to share information, receive information, understand it and make informed choices about how the various issues which will ultimately be addressed in their separation agreement should be resolved. They may consult with a lawyer before the mediation process begins, during the mediation process itself, between mediation sessions or only after the process ends but before signing an agreement.

Lawyers can attend mediation with their clients. This is very common where the conflict between parties is high, the legal or factual issues are complicated, or one or both clients feel vulnerable attending on their own.

There are also situations in which new partners, family members or other support people attend the mediation.

Arrangements are always made in advance for anyone other than the parties to attend mediation so that both parties may agree about who will be present at the mediation sessions. Both parties need to agree about third parties being present in the office when the mediation takes place. Sometimes only one party brings a lawyer or a support person to the mediation session and the other

OTTAWA CO-PARENTING SOLUTIONS



"From Parents to Co-Parents"

party is comfortable attending on their own. Sometimes both parties bring lawyers or support people.

In some situations, where things are factually or legally complicated, we ask experts to attend one or more mediation sessions to share information or to explain their expert reports.

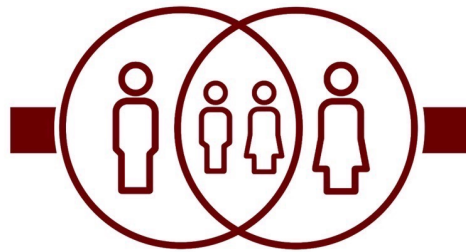
MEDIATION SESSIONS

At the beginning of each mediation session, we will decide together what issues will be addressed during the time that we have scheduled so that important issues are not left to the end of the session. Most often, there is an order in which issues should be discussed because some legal issues are naturally linked.

Some parties are comfortable being in the same room throughout the mediation process. Even when they disagree about how a particular issue should be resolved, they are able to have productive discussions about their differences and ultimately reach an agreement.

If parties feel too emotional or vulnerable in the presence of the other party and feel they can concentrate better when the other party is not present, mediation can take place with parties in separate rooms called "shuttle mediation".

Some parties are together in the same room for most of the mediation process, however, each party may speak with me privately to discuss specific issues which may be more difficult to discuss when they are together. These break-outs are known as "caucus" sessions. They are also very common.



"From Parents to Co-Parents"

PREPARING YOUR AGREEMENT

Once you have agreed about how issues you need to address will be resolved, we will prepare your agreements in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement or prepare a full Parenting Plan.

INDEPENDENT LEGAL ADVICE

It is always advised that, after reviewing your draft agreement (MOU or Parenting Plan), that you seek independent legal advice about the terms of the agreement.

Elizabeth Fabiano, AccFM, FDRP Med PC

Certified Specialist in Family Mediation & Parenting Coordination

7 Marquette Ave., Suite 905, Ottawa, Ontario, K1L 8A7

613-240-7223 lizfabiano@PNAchange.com ottawacoparentingsolutions.com