



How to find a Mediator

What to look for

What is mediation?

Mediation is a proven and well-accepted process for resolving disputes. Mediation is usually a less formal process that allows for parties to reach their own resolution with the assistance of a trained, neutral Mediator that facilitates their discussion. Mediation is usually quicker and less-expensive than other options. The outcome can be made binding, and can set the stage for improved relationships between the parties. Mediation can be an effective way for people in conflict to resolve their disputes as an alternative option to formal engagement of the Courts or other more costly processes.

What is a Mediator?

A Mediator is an impartial person trained in conflict resolution - often referred to as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). The Mediator is chosen by the parties to help them build understanding and negotiate a solution to their conflict. The Mediator does not make decisions and does not provide legal advice to the parties. The Mediator assists the parties to reach their own mutually acceptable resolutions. This is done by: structuring the communication process, maintaining channels of open communication, facilitating expression of needs, helping the parties to identify and frame their issues in dispute, and supporting parties to find solutions that are lasting and meaningful.

Where do I find a Mediator?

While there are many reputable professionals who offer mediation services as part of their private practice, there are provincial and national organizations that provide lists (with biographies) of Mediators who are available in Alberta, including those who have earned mediation designations based on meeting the specified requirements for training, experience and assessed skills. Some of the more commonly accessed Mediator directories are listed below. You and the other party need to agree on which Mediator you will use.

ADRIA: Alternative Dispute Resolution Institute of Alberta: www.adralberta.com/

Mediation and Arbitration Roster for Alberta. Designations include Q.Med (Qualified Mediator) and C.Med (Chartered Mediator). Please see web site for designation descriptions.

AFMS: Alberta Family Mediation Society: www.afms.ca

Family Mediation and Parenting Coordinator Roster for Alberta. Qualifications include PFM (Practicing Family Mediator), RFM (Registered Family Mediator) and RPCA (Registered Parenting Coordinator and Arbitrator).

ADRIC: Alternative Dispute Resolution Institute of Canada: www.adric.ca

FMC: Family Mediation Canada: www.fmc.ca FMC Certification

Helpful Questions when hiring a Mediator:

Mediation is not a regulated profession; anyone can call themselves a Mediator. Consider what would be important to you in choosing a professional to help you resolve your dispute. In addition to asking questions about designations and costs please note the Mediators may use different styles of mediation. For example Facilitative, Evaluative and Transformative.

Facilitative Mediation: The Mediator facilitates the parties' discussion, helping them explore issues in dispute, and their individual and shared interests, and possible settlement options, without providing the Mediator's views as to how a judge might rule in a contested court application or trial.

Evaluative Mediation: The Mediator will, at the parties' request, provide his/her views as to the strengths and weaknesses of the parties' positions and how a judge might rule in a contested court application or trial.

Transformative Mediation: The Mediator helps the parties to transform their ongoing relationship to allow for their more effective approaches to addressing and resolving current and future disputes.

Here are some common questions to ask:

- Do you have a professional mediation designation? (C.Med, Q.Med, PFM, RFM, RPCA, etc.)
- What other professional qualifications do you have that are relevant to the conflict? (LLB, RSW, R.Psych., P.Eng, CHRP, etc)
- What is your mediation and conflict resolution training?
- What is your experience in this area? How many mediations have you conducted?
- What style of mediation do you use? Interest based, Facilitative, Evaluative, Transformative
- Are you a member of a professional association? If yes which one(s)?
- Do you follow a code of ethics?
- What recourse do I have if I am unhappy with the service I receive? Is there a public complaints mechanism?
- Do you carry professional liability insurance that covers mediation?
- What are your rates and how do you expect to receive payment?
- How do you calculate your hours?
- How long will mediation take? What is the process?
- How familiar are you with the topic of my dispute and do you have specific training in this area (i.e. Family Law/ Child Support/ Divorce Act, Landlord and Tenant, Contract, Workplace, Labour Relations, Construction/Engineering?)
- If safety is a concern, how would the Mediator ensure everyone's safety?
- Is the mediation confidential?