

ACCORD A CENTER FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION INC.

Included in this download :

ACCORD Mediator Application Checklist

Mediation Program Overview

Mediation Training Application

Volunteer Mediator Job Description

A Business Casual Dress Code

ACCORD Mediator Application Checklist

- Volunteer mediator application
- Training application
- Background check forms
- Resume
- One page essay on why you would like to become a volunteer mediator.

If you are interested in attending ACCORD's initial mediation training, but do not wish to become a mediator with ACCORD please fill out and return the mediation training application.

Return Materials to:

ACCORD
Kacey Ellsworth
Assistant Executive Director
30 W. State St.
Binghamton, NY 13901

Mediation Program Overview

Mediation is a voluntary process in which individuals that are in disagreement about an issue, problem, or misunderstanding meet with a specially trained neutral party who helps them identify issues, clarify perceptions, and explore options for a mutually acceptable outcome. This provides many individuals a successful alternative to avoiding the problem, fighting, or going to court.

In Mediation:

- Both individuals agree to meet with a neutral mediator and discuss the issues
- The mediator does not take sides but makes sure each person is heard
- Each person gets to present his/her position or views
- The mediator helps clarify the issues
- The mediator helps the individuals find the areas on which they agree
- Mediators do not make decisions for the individuals
- Agreements may be either verbal or written
- When appropriate, a copy of the agreement may be provided to a court

Advantages of mediation:

- Mediation encourages communication and cooperation between parties
- minor disputes can be resolved before they become major problems
- Mediation may save you time in court
Parties are empowered to reach their own solutions; the parties are in charge of the outcome
- Participation is voluntary and may result in a lasting resolution
- Mediation may be scheduled quickly
- The service is free, convenient and confidential
- Mediators do not take sides or place blame
- Agreements must be mutually acceptable to participants
- Voluntary agreements have a high compliance rate
- Agreements can be enforceable contracts
- Additional mediations can be scheduled to fine tune or renegotiate an agreement

ACCORD has helped to resolve thousands of disputes between:

- Neighbors
- Employer/employee
- Landlord/tenant
- Customer/merchant
- Friends, partners and family members
- Parents (custody, visitation and child support)

ACCORD's Dispute Resolution Programs include:

- Small Claims
- Community
- Family Court (Custody, Visitation & Child Support)
- Special Education & VESID
- Department of Labor
- Divorce Mediation
- Assisted Senior Communication
- Lemon Law Arbitration
- Family Team meetings
- Department of Social Services Conciliation

Mediation: The Process

Pre-mediation – Referral, intake and scheduling

1. Mediator(s) Preparations

- a. Look over materials and, if co-mediating, discuss with the other mediator how you will share the process
- b. Prepare the mediation room
- c. Greet and seat the parties

2. Opening Statement by Mediators

- a. Mediation is confidential and voluntary
- b. Mediators are neutral
- c. Explain the mediation process
- d. Explain the ground rules

3. The Storytelling Phase

- a. Give each party the opportunity to tell his/her side of the story, without interruption from the other
- b. Take notes on separate paper or write on sample agreement
- c. Summarize, in impartial language, what the participants said
- d. Ask if it is correct
- e. Ask more questions if you don't have a clear picture of what happened
- f. Acknowledge the parties' feelings

4. Identifying the Issues

- a.** Help the parties to separate needs from wants, interests from positions
- b.** Help the parties identify areas of agreement

5. Search for Solutions

- a.** Help the parties generate options for resolving the dispute
- b.** Bring the parties to a mutually acceptable solution

6. Writing the Agreement/Termination

- a.** Identify the parties by full name
- b.** Balance the agreement
- c.** Be clear, simple and specific
- d.** Use language the parties understand
- e.** Have all parties sign the agreement
- f.** Give copies of agreement to participants
- g.** Give original to staff
- h.** In the case of termination, thank the parties for trying and suggest other methods of resolving the conflict

MEDIATION TRAINING APPLICATION

Please check one:

- I wish to attend Community Mediation Training for a fee of \$350.

Or

- I wish to apply to become a Volunteer Community Mediator and have the fee waived. I understand that I will be making a commitment to make available at least one 2 hour time slot each month, for a minimum of 2 years.
A \$50 donation is requested to help offset the cost of the training. (This may be waived if it creates a financial hardship or barrier to applying). Please use the return envelope provided to mail in your donation.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Other Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Volunteer Mediator Job Description

Qualifications:

Interest in effective communication and dispute resolution
Time to devote to training, mediating and continuing education
Ability to respect and relate to people from various backgrounds
Ability to act as an impartial third party neutral, without bias
Excellent verbal and written skills

Requirements:

Volunteer Mediators must complete a 36-hour Initial and Court Related classroom training at ACCORD or another Community Dispute Resolution Center. Additionally, mediators must complete child Custody/Visitation and Child Support Training in order to mediate these types of cases.

Mediator trainees must complete the ACCORD apprenticeship plan, in order to become a certified mediator. Once a mediator has completed their initial training they must observe two mediations. Then the trainee will co-mediate five mediations with an experienced mediator. After the mediations the apprentice and experienced mediator will de-brief with staff and discuss the apprentice's performance during the mediation. Upon completion of five co-mediations the apprentice will complete a final co-mediation with a staff member. After the mediation the trainee will de-brief with the staff member and the staff member will make a recommendation regarding the trainee's status as a certified mediator.

Mediators are required to obtain a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education credits per year and a minimum of mediating or co-mediating 3 mediations per year to maintain certification. ACCORD offers a variety of continuing education opportunities throughout the year and provides information regarding opportunities in the area.

Duties:

Mediators should arrive promptly, 15 minutes before scheduled mediation is to begin. This allows time to review the packet of forms for the mediation and to speak with the co-mediator to decide how you will share the process. Mediators should dress appropriately; business casual.

Mediators greet and seat the parties

Mediators should be aware of any needs of the clients before beginning the session (i.e. bathroom, water, etc.).

After the mediation, mediators will fill out all Mediator Feedback Forms, de-brief, and critique each other (i.e. how the session went, could either of you have done anything differently, etc.).

If a mediator cannot attend a scheduled mediation, ACCORD needs as much notice as possible so that another mediator may be found in order to avoid canceling and rescheduling the mediation.

A Business Casual Dress Code

ACCORD's objective in establishing a business casual dress code, is to allow our employees & volunteers to work comfortably in the workplace. Yet, we still need our employees & volunteers to project a professional image for our customers, potential employees, volunteers and our community visitors. Because all casual clothing is not suitable for the office, these guidelines will help you determine what is appropriate. Clothing that reveals too much cleavage, your back, your chest, your feet, your stomach or your underwear is not appropriate. Even in a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees or the public is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged. Sports teams, university, and fashion brand names on clothing are generally acceptable.

This is a general overview of appropriate business attire. Items that are not appropriate for the office are listed, too. Neither list is all - inclusive and both are open to change. The lists tell you what is generally acceptable as business casual attire and what is generally not acceptable as business casual attire.

No dress code can ever cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If you are uncertainty about acceptable, professional business casual attire for work, please ask your supervisor or the Assistant Director.

Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants

Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Clean blue jeans without holes are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda short, short shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants.

Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits

Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Beach dresses and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the office.