

## WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is a process by which parents in conflict try to resolve their problems with the assistance of a neutral person (the mediator).

Mediators do not take sides or tell people what to do. They give you a chance to talk about what is really important to you and your children and listen to what is really important to the other parent.

Through a no-cost, confidential screening process called an ***Orientation Session***, both of you learn about what mediation can do for you. The screener also hears the concerns and issues that you both have and helps you decide whether mediation would be helpful for you and your family at this time.

After the orientation session, if you both agree to mediate your differences, you can choose from a master list of mediators in the area or you can use the Piedmont Dispute

Resolution Center (PDRC) and their professional, certified mediators to work with you in mediation.

If you decide to mediate with PDRC, your mediation services will be free of charge through a program of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

## HOW DOES MEDIATION WORK?

First the mediator will establish a few simple rules: people talk one at a time, and treat the mediation process and each other respectfully. Then each person has the chance to speak uninterrupted about the issues that have brought them to court. The mediator will listen and help both people to develop creative ways for resolving the issues in a way that suits your particular situations.

If you resolve the issue(s), the mediator will write your agreement in a format acceptable to the Court.

***If you have an attorney, it is important that your attorney reviews the agreement with you before it is signed.***

Once an agreement is signed by all parties, it is submitted to the Court and reviewed by the Judge. Once the Judge signs off on your agreement, it is entered as a court order.



***Statistics show that children are more hurt by the conflict surrounding parental separation than by the separation itself.***

## ASK YOURSELF:

**Do I want the Court to decide how to deal with my family problems, or can we decide them ourselves?**

**What happens if the court decides against me?**

**What kind of damage may be done to my future relationship with my child's other parent, as the result of the Court process?**

**What will it cost – in time, money and hurt?**

**Which is best for my child(ren), the adversarial Court process, or their parents deciding together what is best for our family?**



## PIEDMONT DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

The Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center (PDRC) is a non-profit, community-based organization serving the counties of Caroline, Culpeper, Fauquier, Loudoun, Madison, Prince William, Rappahannock, Stafford and Spotsylvania. Mediation provides a structured, informal method of resolving many types of conflicts. PDRC's mediators are certified by the Judicial Council of Virginia.

Other programs of PDRC include:

***Restorative Justice Services:*** A program that brings the victims of a crime together with the offenders in a safe, confidential environment to discuss the incident and to decide together how best to repair the harm.

***Peer Mediation: Training for students to act as mediators.***

Please visit our website at  
[www.PiedmontDisputeResolution.org](http://www.PiedmontDisputeResolution.org)

## JUVENILE & DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT

***Custody, Visitation and  
Child Support Mediation***

**When you file a petition with the  
Court, the Judge says:**



**“Try Mediation First”**

## PIEDMONT DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 53  
Warrenton, VA 20186  
(540) 347-6650