



Collaborative Resolutions Group, Inc.
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MEDIATION FACT SHEET

Collaborative Resolutions Groups is the approved provider of the Housing Mediation Program for Franklin and Hampshire Counties, providing landlord/tenant mediation services free of charge at this time.

Does mediation make sense for you?

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process for resolving disputes with the help of a neutral third party. The mediator(s) will help the parties in dispute come up with solutions which meet the needs of everyone involved. The mediator(s) will not take sides or prescribe solutions. The mediators will not take any actions on behalf of either party against the other party in any current or future litigation or other dispute resolution process.

There are three fundamental principles of mediation that are important to understand before beginning mediation:

1. **Mediation is voluntary.** Mediation only happens when all parties agree to use it.
2. **Mediation is confidential.** Collaborative Resolutions Group (CRG) will not share any information from the mediation or the intake process without the written consent of all parties. The only exceptions to this confidentiality are: (a) if we hear about child abuse, (b) if we hear about someone who is going to harm him/herself or someone else, or (c) if we hear about someone who plans to commit a crime. We also require all parties to sign an agreement that neither CRG, nor its mediators or records will be brought into any legal, judicial or other proceeding outside of the mediation.
3. **Mediators are neutral.** Your mediator(s) will not be acting as advocate(s) for any party in the dispute. They are facilitators of your negotiating process, setting ground rules, keeping the conversation on track, asking clarifying questions, helping interpret when communication breaks down, and helping draw up any written agreements. This means all parties must be able to negotiate on their own behalf. Mediators are trained to help manage the difficult dynamics of a conflict situation, but each person needs to be able to express his/her own needs and wants. Any resolutions which come out of mediation are created by the mediation participants themselves.

The mediation process begins with each party either filling out an intake questionnaire on-line or having an intake with a CRG Case Coordinator. This aids the case coordinator in gathering enough information to understand the situation, determine whether or not the case is

appropriate for mediation, and to assign mediators. Once the intake has been received from all parties, the case coordinator contacts each person to answer any final questions and to schedule the case. Most often there will be a team of two mediators assigned to each case. Occasionally there is just one mediator assigned.

The mediation is usually set up in two-hour sessions. Currently, due to Covid-19, all mediations are conducted either via the Zoom, on-line platform, or via phone. Some large-group disputes are scheduled for longer sessions. If the dispute is not resolved by the end of the first session, the parties decide whether or not to schedule another session. If they choose to continue in mediation, they arrange the time for the next session with the mediator. The mediation process continues until the parties resolve the issues or believe mediation is no longer useful to them.

If parties reach agreement in mediation, mediators will create a written agreement for all parties to sign. Everyone will receive a copy of the fully signed agreement. If the agreement is going to be filed at a court, everyone will have to agree to how, where and when that will happen.

If you have further questions about mediation or other services offered by CRG, please feel free to go to our website: www.collaborativeresolutionsgroup.org, or email us at info@crg-collab.org.