

How Does the Virtual Family Mediation Program Work?

Referral

Family Justice Services, or other referral sources, will refer clients to the Virtual Family Mediation Program by emailing contact details and a brief case summary to the Program Manager. Clients can also self-refer. To be approved, you must be:

1. Eligible for Access Pro Bono services; and
2. Agreeable to mediation

Registration

To register into the Program, each party must submit:

1. Application Form
2. Financial Disclosure Form (with *all* required financial documents)
3. Intake form

Each step must be completed by BOTH parties before moving on to the next step. If you don't hear from us about next steps it means we are waiting on completion of the current step.

Once both parties are deemed eligible for the Program and complete all required forms as well as provide all required documents, the Program Manager will look for a volunteer Mediator.

Mediator Appointment

You will have a pre-mediation screening appointment with the Mediator. This appointment is separate for each party and is an opportunity for the Mediator to discuss the case with you and ask questions so they can best prepare for the mediation. The Mediator will receive the information you provided during registration. The Program Manager will not share your information or disclosure with the other party.

Appointment with Independent Legal Advice Lawyer

After you have met with the Mediator, contact the Program Manager to arrange your appointment with the Independent Legal Advice (ILA) Lawyer.

You'll meet with your ILA Lawyer for a 30-minute consultation. Your ILA Lawyer will consider the details of your case and advise you before your mediation.

Please note that only pro bono parties receive pro bono legal advice through the program. If you are considered a non-pro bono party, you will have to arrange your own legal advice.

All program participants are required to have legal advice prior to mediation.

The Mediation

Once you and the other party have each met with ILA Lawyers and your Mediator separately, you can contact your Mediator directly to schedule your mediation at a mutually convenient date and time. The mediator will tell you how long to expect the mediation to last.

During the mediation, your Mediator will do their best to secure a provisional agreement between you and the other party.

Agreement Reached

If you and the other party come to a provisional agreement during the mediation, you will have the opportunity to meet with your ILA Lawyer again to review the agreement before you sign.

The other party will do the same. Once you've both signed the agreement, it becomes final, and the mediation process is complete.

We recommend that you file your agreement with the court and can provide information on how to do so. The Program does not file your agreement for you.

No Agreement Reached

If you and the other party are unable to reach an agreement during the mediation, the mediation process is over and your dispute is left unresolved.

Program staff may then refer you to other helpful services and resources.

Questions about connecting with your ILA or Mediator?
 Contact familymediation@accessprobono.ca