

What is Mediation?

When parents and providers disagree about the provision of early intervention services related to the development of an infant or toddler, birth to three with a disability, either party may request mediation.

Mediation is an alternative to a formal administrative hearing.

Mediation is a form of dispute resolution in which an impartial mediator assists parties in a collaborative problem solving process.

Mediators help parents and service providers resolve conflicts, clarify issues and develop mutually acceptable agreements.

Mediation lends itself to the development of a positive working relationship between parents and service providers.

MEDIATION IS:

- Voluntary for parents and service providers.
- Completely confidential.
- An informal and collaborative process.
- Non-adversarial.
- Less time consuming than an administrative proceeding.
- At no cost to either party.

What are the qualifications of the Mediator?

Specifically trained mediators have:

- Experience and training in collaborative problem solving, communication and conflict resolution.
- Training in state and federal laws and regulations related to the IDEA.

Who pays for IDEA Part C Mediation?

Mediation services are available at no charge to parents or service providers and is funded by the Department of Early Learning - Early Support for Infants and Toddlers.

Where are Mediations Held?

Mediations occur statewide at locations that are mutually acceptable to the participants.

How does the mediation process work?

Call Sound Options Group L.L.C. at the number on the front of this brochure. A case manager will talk with you and answer your questions. Once there has been an agreement to mediate and a date, time and location determined for everyone, we will then assign a mediator and send a written confirmation of the mediation.

Generally, once everyone has agreed, mediation can be scheduled in as few as fourteen days

Issues that fall under IDEA Part C may at times be complex. Therefore, it is essential that participants set aside a **full day** for completion of the mediation.

During the mediation, the mediator provides both parties the opportunity to present their views of the conflict. The mediator does not make decisions or settle the dispute. The mediator helps the parties develop solutions which they believe are best for the child. Agreements are documented in writing and signed by all parties.

What can mediation do for you?

- Promote positive working relationships between parents and service providers.
- Encourage mutual problem solving efforts
- Help parents and service provider's focus on what they have in common: the child.
- Resolve disagreements concerning the identification, evaluation, placement or early intervention services provided to an infant or toddler, birth to age three with a disability, and their family.

Mediation is:

- Voluntary
- Confidential
- Timely

The high percentage of resolutions resulting from mediation indicates that the process is successful for many. While mediation is an alternative to an administrative hearing, participating in mediation does not delay or deny anyone's right to have a hearing.

How do I find a Mediator?

To request mediation or for more information please contact:

Sound Options Group, LLC

(Administrative Agents for Department of Early Learning- Early Support for Infant and Toddlers):

(800) 692-2540
(206) 842-2298
(206) 780-5776 (fax)

mail@somtg.com (email)

Washington State Relay Service:
(800) 833-6388 (TDD)
(800) 833-6384 (Voice)

Sound Options Group, L.L.C., is an affiliation of professionals dedicated to the effective and durable resolution of conflict through mediation, facilitation and skill development training.

IDEA Part C

Mediation for Early Intervention Services



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