

# A guide to workplace mediation



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No matter how successful a team or organisation, difficulties in communication are almost inevitable in any group of people working together. Differing beliefs, values, goals and life experiences all have the potential to contribute to misunderstandings. And although most problems can be resolved with relatively little intervention, it is all too easy for conflicting perspectives and expectations to escalate into something much more difficult to deal with.

Recognising this, CiC offers a Mediation service aimed at helping organisations prevent and manage interpersonal difficulties to enable better working relationships, build more successful teams and maximise organisational performance.

## Workplace mediation

Workplace mediation is a structured process in which an impartial party, the mediator, helps parties in the workplace to resolve the dispute or difficulties that have arisen between them.

### The mediator:

- Is responsible for facilitating and determining the procedure for the mediation.
- Has no legal power, does not impose solutions and makes no attempt to judge the situation.
- Helps those involved to communicate, negotiate and work towards their own agreement
- Facilitates a safe and respectful discussion.

Workplace mediation is a voluntary process, with the mediator or parties involved having the right to end the process at any time.

The mediator and parties involved in the mediation are required to treat any information received during the process as confidential. The mediator will not pass on information from any party without their consent to do so.

## Workplace mediation process: stage 1

The mediator has a private meeting with each separate party. At each of these initial meetings, the party is given an explanation of workplace mediation and the opportunity to ask any questions. The mediator asks those involved to discuss in detail how they see the situation and what they feel about it. The main issues involved are clarified and ways of resolving them explored. At the end of the meeting, the mediator confirms with the party their agreement to continue with mediation and discusses how they wish to proceed.

## Workplace mediation process: stage 2

In most cases a meeting is then arranged bringing the parties together either online or face to face. This meeting can only take place if the mediator and parties involved choose to participate and agree the meeting arrangements and procedures.

When facilitating these meetings, the mediator ensures that they are safe and controlled, allowing those involved the opportunity to speak and to respond to the issues raised.

The meeting is structured. At the start the mediator confirms how the meeting will be conducted, what the role of the mediator is and what is expected from the parties. The mediator or parties involved have the right to end the meeting at any time, take a break or request separate meetings between one party and the mediator. All participants are asked to agree certain ground rules for the meeting.

Each of the parties involved is then given an opportunity to speak about the situation, without being interrupted. The issues to be discussed at the meeting are clarified and confirmed. The mediator works through these issues with the parties, helping them to communicate, negotiate and work towards their own agreement. Any agreement reached is the responsibility of the parties themselves and is not legally binding.

The workplace mediation process described here may sometimes need to be redesigned according to the circumstances.



## Conclusion of workplace mediation

After the conclusion of the mediation meetings, the mediator is available to the parties by phone for a short time, to provide support for any agreement made.

The mediator confirms the end of mediation by writing to the parties and the commissioning organisation. A written report is not produced and normally the mediator's notes will be destroyed at the conclusion of mediation.

**For further information or advice  
please contact your line manager  
or a member of the HR team.**