



## MEDIATION SERVICES

### Volunteer Mediator Requirements

#### Qualifications:

- Exceptional interpersonal skills
- Ability to work collaboratively with others
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to communicate respectfully and effectively in cross-cultural settings
- Commitment to Mediation Services' mission and values
- Ability to speak a second language an asset

#### Availability:

- Willingness to make a minimum commitment of two years following the completion of the apprenticeship program
- Available to mediate a minimum of two daytime and/or evening sessions per month (weekdays only)
- Available to facilitate both Restorative Action for Youth (RAY) meetings and mediations

#### Experience:

- Knowledge of local communities, including human rights and social justice issues
- Relevant university degree or work experience (ie. background in Conflict Resolution Studies or applicable Human Service field, experience working with individuals in conflict, at-risk, or in care) is an asset.
- Commitment to the principles of non-violence, restorative justice in their volunteer work, in their personal lives and communities and as a response to broader social injustices. Volunteers are expected to demonstrate openness to and the ability to work with different cultures and lifestyles
- Completion of Mediation Services' Victim Offender Mediation training program<sup>1</sup>
- Completion of Mediation Services' apprenticeship program<sup>2</sup>
  - Co-facilitate 6-10 mediations and 4-6 RAY sessions with a mentor mediator
  - Demonstrate an ability to guide parties through the mediation process
- Experience dealing with crisis or mental health issues considered an asset

#### Responsibilities:

- Must produce a current criminal record check prior to the apprenticeship period.
- Agrees with and maintains Mediation Services' confidentiality guidelines and code of ethics for mediators.
- Committed to ongoing learning and participate a minimum of two professional development workshops per year.<sup>3</sup>
- Assume responsibility, honour commitments and conduct sessions as scheduled with the volunteer coordinator.
- Provide the volunteer coordinator with monthly availability, and respond to messages from the volunteer coordinator in a timely fashion.
- Dress in a neat and presentable fashion, reflective of the mediation participants.
- Maintain impartiality among persons in conflict and refrain from discussion of personal values.
- Facilitate effective sessions in which parties in conflict may explore issues, express feelings and arrive and solutions which are mutually acceptable to, and agreed upon by the parties.
- Terminate a session if the parties are not able to voluntarily participate, or if safety/ re-victimization issues arise.
- Debrief each session with co-facilitator in order to provide a summary for the caseworker. The debrief also serves to exchange constructive feedback, enabling continued skill development for all volunteers.

---

1 See Volunteer Application Process for further details.

2 See Volunteer Application Process for further details.

3 Mediation Services offers volunteer-specific professional development workshops at no cost. Also, after completion of the apprenticeship period, volunteers receive access to the Resolution Skills Centre courses at a reduced rate.

Note: As a collective, it is important that our volunteers reflect the diversity of our community (ie. with respect to ethnic origin, income level, education level, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc.) and also demonstrate understanding of local cultures and social justice issues.

## Volunteer Mediator Application Process

### ***Application Process***

Applications are kept on file for one year and candidates are reviewed annually. Only those selected for further consideration will be contacted for an interview to take part in our Victim Offender Mediation (VOM) training.

### ***Victim Offender Mediation Training***

Prior to becoming a volunteer mediator with Mediation Services, qualifying applicants must be available to attend all eight sessions of Mediation Services' VOM training program (24 hours) *\*This training is only offered once annually, free of charge, to qualified applicants interested in becoming a volunteer through our apprenticeship program. VOM participants are not guaranteed a position as an apprentice mediator.*

VOM training will prepare applicants to work with cases that come through our court diversion program, both to mediated between victims and offenders, and to facilitate Restorative Action for Youth (RAY) meetings.

### ***Volunteer Mediator Apprenticeship Program***

After the training, select participants may be invited to take part in our volunteer apprenticeship program if:

- Mediation Services has an apprentice mediator position available.
- Mediation Services has time and resources to mentor an apprentice mediator.
- The candidate has the availability and flexibility to be actively involved as a volunteer mediator and to partake in a half day of office orientation and caseworker shadowing.

The apprenticeship program consists of 6-10 mediations and 4-6 RAY sessions, wherein apprentices are paired with an experienced mentor mediator. A mentor is able to provide guidance and constructive feedback to persons beginning to mediate. Throughout the apprenticeship period the volunteer coordinator will be in contact with the apprentice to discuss progress and any resources that may be helpful in furthering their development. At the completion of the apprenticeship period the volunteer coordinator and apprentice will meet to determine if the apprentice has had sufficient experience including different conflicts and working with different co-mediators, and to evaluate their ability to guide participants through the mediation process.