

# **Kansas Legal Services**

A non-profit law firm and community education organization helping low and moderate income people in Kansas



[www.kansaslegalservices.org](http://www.kansaslegalservices.org)

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## **Mediation Services**

### **Midland Mediation and Settlement Services of Kansas Legal Services**



**What is mediation?**

Mediation is a practice in which a trained mediator aids in the communication and negotiation between people who don't agree on an issue. The goal of mediation is to reach an agreement that settles the dispute in a jointly pleasing manner. Mediations are held at a neutral location and in a safe environment.

During the mediation, all parties are given the chance to share their thoughts and feelings about the matter. With the mediator, all persons jointly create an agenda, narrow down what they disagree on, define each person's interests and then create an agreement.

## **Benefits of Mediation**

- Mediation is neutral. Mediators do not act as advocates, give any opinion or decide how the dispute should be resolved. The mediator does not place blame or take sides.
- Participants control the outcome. Individuals in mediation create their own agreement. The mediator's role is to help develop a realistic, workable solution that takes every person's thoughts and feelings into consideration.
- Mediation is private. Kansas law (with some exceptions) makes mediations confidential. All notes made by mediators are destroyed after an agreement is reached. No party can force the mediator to give them records and no info specific to the mediation is allowed in court.
- Mediation can resolve issues quickly. Mediation can resolve disputes in a matter of days as opposed to months or years it may take in regular court.
- Mediation can help relationships. Mediation can help build a positive framework for future dealings between persons. Mediation also models problem solving, listening and negotiation skills that can help parties over the long run.
- Mediation gets results. Depending on the type of problem, between 40% and 80% of disputes taken to mediation result in agreement.

## **How Do I Access Mediation Services?**

KLS provides mediation in a wide variety of cases. These include: insurance disputes, special education, employment discrimination, public access, foster care and family issues such as custody and visitation. We receive referrals for mediation from local district courts, the Kansas Human Rights Commission and others. KLS also offers fee based mediations on a sliding scale.

## **KLS Mediation Programs**

Access to Justice Mediations (ATJ) are funded by the Office of Judicial Administration under the direction of the Kansas Supreme Court. ATJ funding allows persons with low incomes to get mediation services at no charge. Often ATJ mediations involve domestic matters such as custody and visitation, as well as Child in Need of Care (CINC) cases.

Kansas Legal Services contracts with the Kansas Human Rights Commission (KHRC) to offer mediation to persons with disputes involved in employment, housing, and public accommodation complaints filed with the KHRC. Matching funds for this program are provided by the IOLTA Program.

Kansas Legal Services accepts referrals of domestic, civil or juvenile disputes from judges, attorneys, agencies and the general public. These are accepted on a sliding for-fee basis whenever other funding sources do not apply.

### **Contact info for Topeka Mediation Office**

### **Contact Info for Wichita Mediation Office**

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