

Mediation Guidelines

1. **DEFINITION OF MEDIATION.** Mediation is a process under which an impartial person, the Mediator, facilitates communication between the parties to promote reconciliation, settlement or understanding among them. The Mediator may suggest ways of resolving the dispute but may not impose his own judgment on the issues for that of the parties.
2. **AGREEMENT OF PARTIES.** Whenever the parties have agreed to mediation, they shall be deemed to have made these rules, as amended and in effect as of the date of the submission of the dispute, as part of their agreement to mediate.
3. **CONSENT TO MEDIATOR.** The parties' consent to the appointment of the individual named as the Mediator in their case. The Mediator shall act as an advocate for resolution and shall use his best efforts to assist the parties in reaching a mutually acceptable settlement.
4. **CONDITIONS PRECEDENT TO SERVING AS MEDIATOR.** The Mediator will only serve in cases in which the parties are represented by attorneys. The Mediator shall not serve as a Mediator in any dispute in which he has any financial or personal interest in the result of the mediation. Prior to accepting an appointment, the Mediator shall disclose any circumstances likely to create a presumption of bias or prevent a prompt meeting with the parties. In the event that the parties disagree as to whether the Mediator shall serve, the Mediator shall not serve.
5. **AUTHORITY OF MEDIATOR.** The Mediator does not have the authority to decide any issue for the parties but will attempt to facilitate the voluntary resolution of the dispute by the parties. The Mediator is authorized to conduct joint and separate meetings with the parties and to offer suggestions to assist the parties achieve settlement. If necessary, the Mediator may also obtain expert advice concerning technical aspects of the dispute, provided that the parties agree and assume the expenses of obtaining such advice. Arrangements for obtaining such advice shall be made by the Mediator or the parties, as the Mediator shall determine.

6. **MEDIATOR CANNOT IMPOSE SETTLEMENT.** The parties understand that the Mediator will not and cannot impose a settlement in their case and agree that a settlement, if any, must be voluntarily agreed to by the parties. The Mediator, as an advocate for settlement, will use every effort to facilitate the negotiations. The Mediator does not warrant or represent that settlement will result from the mediation process.
7. **TIME AND PLACE OF MEDIATION.** The Mediator shall schedule each mediation session at a time mutually convenient for the parties. Unless otherwise requested or arranged, all mediations will be conducted virtually via Zoom. In-person mediations may be held at a mutually agreed upon location, subject to the Mediator's availability and approval.
8. **PRIVACY.** Mediation sessions are private. The parties and their representatives may attend mediation sessions. Other persons may attend only with the permission of the parties and with the consent of the Mediator.
9. **CONFIDENTIALITY.** Confidential information disclosed to a Mediator by the parties or by witnesses in the course of mediation shall not be divulged by the Mediator. All records, reports, or other documents received by the Mediator while serving in the capacity shall be confidential. The Mediator shall not be compelled to divulge such records or to testify in regard to the mediation in any adversary processing or judicial forum. Any party that violates this agreement shall pay all fees and expenses of the Mediator and other parties, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred in opposing the efforts to compel testimony or records from the Mediator.
10. The parties shall maintain the confidentiality of the mediation and shall not rely on or introduce as evidence in any arbitral, judicial, or other proceeding:
 - a. Views expressed or suggestions made by another party with respect to a possible settlement of the dispute
 - b. Admissions made by another party in the course of the mediation proceedings
 - c. Proposals made or views expressed by the Mediator, or
 - d. The fact that another party had or had not indicated a willingness to accept a proposal for settlement made by the Mediator.

11. NO STENOGRAPHIC RECORD. There shall be no stenographic record of the mediation process and no person shall record any portion of the mediation session.
12. EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY. The Mediator is not a necessary or proper party in judicial proceedings relating to the mediation. Neither Mediator nor any law firm employing Mediator shall be liable to any party for any act or omission in connection with any mediation conducted under these rules.
13. INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION OF RULES. The Mediator shall interpret and apply all these rules.
14. FEES AND EXPENSES. The Mediator's daily fee shall be agreed upon prior to mediation and shall be paid in advance of each mediation day. All other expenses of the mediation, including fees and expenses of the Mediator, shall be borne equally by the parties unless they agree otherwise.