

## 09 - Mediation Programs

### VOLUNTARY MEDIATION

What do you do when...

- Barking dog, noise, garbage, abandoned cars, boundary disputes, or parking problems put you at odds with your neighbors?
- You have arguments that never seem to get resolved with family, house mates or co-workers?
- You are having trouble with your landlord/tenant over security deposits, repairs or damages?
- You are involved in any relationship and need help resolving differences?

**Community Mediation Services** is a program to help you find solutions to your problems. It can be an alternative to the hassle and expense of going to court. It is a way to resolve arguments and disputes through mediation.

**Community Mediation Services** is a mediation program funded by community donations and by a grant from the Michigan State Court Administrative Office.

**Community Mediation Services** helps people find ways to settle their own problems in mutually acceptable ways. You and those with whom you are disputing can all agree to meet with a neutral person (a mediator) in a confidential manner and place.

During the meeting, the disputants will have the opportunity to explain the problem as they see it and present ideas for settling the dispute.

The mediator is not a judge. The mediator will listen carefully to all parties, but does not decide who is right or wrong in the matter. The mediator will only assist the parties involved in reaching and writing a settlement which is agreeable to everyone.

Mediators are volunteers from the community who have completed a state-approved training program. Mediators have been trained to help people hear each other's points of view and to help disputing parties reach common ground.

If a mediation takes place, each party is asked to make a \$20 donation, or whatever he/she can afford, to help cover the operational costs. NO ONE will be turned away if he/she is unable to make a donation.

### TO CONTACT COMMUNITY MEDIATION SERVICES

Call (989) 732-1576 or 1-800-8-RESOLVE (1-800-873-7658). Your call will be automatically transferred to the intake person for community mediation in your county.

**Community Mediation Services** is not intended for disputes involving serious violence, alcohol or drugs, or those requiring legal assistance such as filing lawsuits, criminal defenses, wills, etc.

If your dispute is not suited for Community Mediation Services, you will be provided with other referrals in the community which might be better suited to assist you.

### COURT REFERRED MEDIATION

Any judge may refer an open case to mediation. You may receive a brochure with your summons and you may contact Community Mediation Services.

Or a judge may send Community Mediation Services a referral form with your name and contact information and an Intake Worker will call you.

Mediation at this point is recommended, but not mandatory.

### COURT ORDERED MEDIATION

Any judge may order certain cases to mediation. It is mandatory to attend, but you cannot be ordered to settle. At this point, you may have a choice of mediators from the Community Dispute Resolution Program (Community Mediation Services) or from a list of approved mediators.

The mediation process remains the same throughout mediation conducted in any of these situations.

