

WHAT DO I BRING TO A MEDIATION SESSION



Because mediation sessions generally take two hours or less, the following suggestions will help you to prepare most efficiently and effectively for the meeting.

A willingness to listen

Parties cannot be listening if they are too busy planning what they are going to say next. You never know what you're going to hear, so don't assume you know what the other person will say

An open mind

Bring creative ideas to the mediation table, and be open to the ideas of others. Be ready to put the past in the past and to find ways to form effective solutions for long-lasting neighborhood peace. Think: anything is possible!

A summary and chronology of events

For the sake of time, it is recommended that parties condense their thoughts and experiences on paper beforehand, so that they can be as direct and succinct as possible during the mediation session. A timeline of events is very useful.

Any necessary paperwork, pictures, etc.

Although the outcomes of mediation sessions do not depend on physical evidence (mediators are not judges or arbitrators), it is sometimes handy for parties to have a visual reference when dealing with certain types of disputes (such as property maintenance or land lord-tenant conflicts). *This includes leases and other agreements parties may have entered into prior to mediation. Also bring any relevant records, such as police reports, land surveys, and/or judicial materials such as court orders.*

Other affected parties

Mediation agreements affect the lives of others in countless ways. For this reason, it is suggested that all parties potentially impacted by the agreement be included in the mediation session (such as property managers, other neighbors, etc.). Additionally, those who are in positions to make decisions, such as Homeowner's Association boards, should be asked to participate. Note: ALL mediation participants need to be pre-screened before attending any scheduled meetings. No 'surprise' participants are permitted to attend meetings, for the sake of fairness to all involved.

A positive attitude

You get out of mediation what you put into it. Coming to the mediation table with a hopeless attitude ("We're never going to find a solution") will as easily produce a negative outcome as thinking "We're going to try our best to make this situation better" will bring about positive results. Despite past feelings and experiences, your attitude is your choice and is under your control.

(Over)

WHAT SHOULD I LEAVE AT HOME?

Your attorney

Lawyers are generally not permitted in mediation sessions. Interim agreements can be shown to counsel for approval prior to signing, if necessary. The goal of mediation is to empower parties to resolve their own conflicts together, rather than relying on litigators to advocate for one side or the other.

Unrelated persons

Only those directly affected by the dispute, or those who are in positions to make decisions for a larger group, are invited to participate in the Community Mediation process. This rule is strictly enforced, so if there is someone you'd like to bring to mediation, make sure the mediation staff knows about it and has given approval prior to the mediation session.

Excess baggage

Stick to issues directly related to the dispute at hand. If there are multiple issues to discuss, prioritize them so that each can be dealt with in a timely manner.

Questionable motives to participate

If your desire is anything other than to amicably work out a solution to your neighborhood problem, such as compiling information for a pending lawsuit, please do not use the Community Mediation Program to uncover such information. Mediation sessions are considered confidential, and any information collected in session cannot be used in court.

Props

Please do not bring inappropriate physical evidence to the mediation session.

Children/pets

Mediation is reserved for adults and youth involved. Childcare is not provided by the City of Boulder and other arrangements will need to be made prior to parties arriving at a mediation session. Likewise, pets are not permitted in City buildings unless they are service animals. The City prefers parties *not* leave animals in closed automobiles, or chain dogs up outside the building for animal and human safety reasons.

Community Mediation is a voluntary process that requires the willing participation of all affected parties. Community Mediation should not be perceived as a legal service but rather an informal and alternative dispute resolution program. Mediators are not attorneys and are not permitted to give legal advice and/or interpretation. Mediation agreements are considered binding and are enforced by the parties who create and sign the agreements.



City of Boulder Community Mediation Service
Call 303-441-4364
or look for us at www.bouldercolorado.gov