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Welcome to the CMS Mediator Certification Process

As doctors need training and practice to help their patients heal disease and injury, so also mediators need training and practice to help parties heal relational dis-ease and injury from competing values, misunderstandings, and uncomfortable differences. Both doctors - and mediators - want to leave people better than they found them, and at least do no harm.

Though there is no licensing for mediators in the state of Washington, Resolution Washington, the statewide association of Washington Dispute Resolution Centers (resolutionwashington.org), has developed standards recommending minimum requirements for mediators and mediation training.

Community Mediation Services (CMS) offers a Practicum/Certification Program for apprentice mediators who wish to gain expertise in the facilitative mediation model, and to fulfill the Resolution Washington standards to be certified.

This practicum meets or exceeds the state standards set forth by Resolution Washington and is consistent with that of the other 21 Dispute Resolution Centers organized under RCW 7.75.

When an apprentice mediator meets those requirements, Community Mediation Services will assess the ability to demonstrate the 18 skills (refer to *Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators*) for competent performance as a mediator, as approved by Resolution Washington in 1999.

The apprentice mediator will also be assessed for their ability to

- Work as a team with their co-mediator, and to be flexible with a variety of different styles, skill levels, and personalities
- Handle ethical questions and confidential information appropriately
- Serve as a mentor to others in the mediator training process
- Solo mediate effectively
- Manage their emotions in stressful situations
- Stay calm and curious when exploring conflicts
- Remain optimistic in spite of deeply complex issues
- Be able to observe themselves in the moment and change tactics when the situation requires a different approach

Don't worry! Certification doesn't require being perfect. If so, none of us would be certified, but we aspire to demonstrate these abilities ever more frequently. ☺



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Practicum Pre-Requisites

1. **40-Hour Training:** Complete the Community Mediation Services (or other) 36–40 hour basic mediation training and receive a Certificate of Completion.
2. **Basic Mediation Exam:** Using your manual, respond to these questions and go over them with the practicum supervisor or other certified mediator. The purpose is to help you review your 40-hour training (and hopefully remember more of it) and reflect on how you might personally incorporate the information into your mediating.
3. **Interview with Practicum Supervisor:** Prospective practicum students interview with the practicum supervisor with the intention of understanding the process, goals and expectations.

To Become a Level One Mediator

- **20 hours of Observation:** Invest a minimum of 20 hours (6 – 8 mediations) to observe face-to-face mediations and/or participate in mocks. At least 10 hours should be in observations of at least 3 completed mediations. Purposes for these observations include:
 - Learning from the examples you see and getting a visual/aural reminder of the structure of mediating.
 - Listening for things the mediators said that you might want to use yourself
 - Practicing identifying interests and issues
 - Noticing what seemed to work well, and what you might choose to do differently sharing your perspectives with the mediators to increase mutual learning
- *Please refer to the list of 18 skills identified as “Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators” by Resolution Washington to help guide your observations.
- *During the debrief at the end of the mediation, you will be asked to share what you observed and any questions you have. The mediators can explain their thought process, and learn from yours.
- **Small Claims Trial Observation and Reflection:** Observe at least one Small Claims case in court and write up a reflection, per the “Small Claims Court Trial Observation and Reflection” questions.
 - **Solo Mock Mediation:** Complete a solo mock mediation while practicum supervisor and/or CMS mediator(s) assess your skill levels. You will be given feedback regarding what you did well and what you can improve.

Upon completion, you will be considered a “**Level One Mediator**” and able to co-mediate with a Level Three/Certified Mediator.



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To Become a Level Two Mediator

Co-Mediate 12+ Hours with Certified Mediator: As a Level One Mediator, co-mediate at least 6 completed mediations (12+ hours) with a certified mediator, who will fill out a feedback form for your file. You are encouraged to write your own comments as well on a separate piece of paper. At least one mediation must be observed by the practicum supervisor and/or other certified mediator.

Case Manage 2 Cases under CMS Supervision: As a Level One Mediator, work with Coordinator to manage two cases from entry to exit. Conflict coaching, mediation scheduling and/or resource referrals for clients of CMS

Track hours and Activities: Keep track of your hours and activities as you progress through the levels toward certification. Please note your learnings, your skill development, your successes and areas for improvement. Always feel free to talk with the practicum supervisor and/or certified mediators to get feedback, coaching and support.

Upon completion and approval, you will be considered a “Level Two Mediator,” and able to co-mediate with a certified mediator or another level two mediator

To Become a Level Three Mediator, aka Certified Mediator

Co-Mediate 12+ Hours with Certified or Level 2 Mediator: As a Level Two Mediator, co-mediate at least 6 completed mediations (12+ hours) with a fellow level two mediator or a certified mediator. Feedback forms should be filled out by the certified mediator for the level two mediator, and both level two mediators should fill out one for each other. At least 1 mediation must be observed by the practicum supervisor and/or other certified mediator.

Solo Mediate one Small Claims Case: As a Level Two Mediator, solo mediate at least 1 completed mediation supported by the practicum supervisor. During the solo mediation, the practicum supervisor will be present for support and available to co-mediate if needed.

To be considered for certification, the apprentice mediator should have a minimum of 24 hours actual mediation experience in the role of a mediator or co-mediator.

12+ Hours Additional Education: Apprentice mediators must also participate in a minimum of 12 hours of additional education during the practicum that might include, but is not limited to:

1. In-services
2. Conference attendance
3. Seminars
4. Book/article review
5. Role playing & debriefing (mocks and demonstrations)
6. Peer consultation

Track hours and Activities: Keep track of your hours and activities as you progress through the levels toward certification. Please note your learnings, your skill development, your successes and areas for improvement. Always feel free to talk with the practicum supervisor and/or certified mediators to get feedback, coaching and support.



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CMS will review and assess the apprentice mediator by one or more of the following processes:

1. Observation of co-mediating
2. Interview with mediator
3. Written self-evaluation
4. Solo mock mediation
5. Feedback by mentors/co-mediators based on observation

The decision to certify will include assessment of the “Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators” identified by Resolution Washington as skills necessary for competent performance as a mediator:

1. Ability to listen actively;
2. Ability to analyze problems, identify and separate the issues involved and frame these issues for resolution of decision-making;
3. Ability to use clear, neutral language in speaking and writing;
4. Ability to be sensitive to strongly felt values of the disputants, including gender, ethnic, and cultural differences;
5. Ability to deal with complex factual materials;
6. Ability to create and maintain control of a diverse group of individuals;
7. Ability to identify and to separate the neutral’s personal values from issues under consideration;
8. Ability to understand and redress power imbalances;
9. Ability to understand the negotiation process and the role of advocacy;
10. Ability to earn trust and maintain acceptability;
11. Ability to convert parties’ position into needs and interests;
12. Ability to screen out non-mediable issues;
13. Ability to help parties invent creative options;
14. Ability to help the parties identify principles and criteria that will guide them in decision-making;
15. Ability to help parties assess their non-settlement alternatives;
16. Ability to help the parties make their own informed choices;
17. Ability to help parties assess whether their agreement can be implemented; and
18. Ability to identify when expert outside information is needed by the parties.

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Amendments approved: September 17, 1999

Amended: June 5, 2009



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As previously mentioned, the apprentice mediator will also be assessed for their ability to:

- Work as a team with their co-mediator, and to be flexible with a variety of different styles, skill levels, and personalities
- Handle ethical questions and confidential information appropriately
- Serve as a mentor to others in the mediator training process
- Solo mediate effectively
- Manage their emotions in stressful situations
- Stay calm and curious when exploring conflicts
- Remain optimistic in spite of deeply complex issues
- Be able to observe themselves in the moment and change tactics when the situation requires a different approach

Upon completion of requirements and approval by CMS, the mediator will receive certification, and be considered a **"Level 3 Mediator/Certified Mediator,"** able to solo mediate and to mentor apprentice mediators.

**CMS does not guarantee that participants will successfully achieve certification, even though they may meet minimum requirements. We reserve the right to use our discretion in mediator certification, in accord with Resolution Washington Mediator Certification Guidelines. If skills and requirements are not met, the apprentice and CMS will consider what other opportunities for skill building are appropriate and agree on a revised plan for development and certification.*

Once certified, mediators can maintain certification by:

- Completing 12+ hours of continuing education per year, or 36 hours in 3 years, including Attending classes, conferences, and in-services
- Training, coaching, mentoring, role playing (Including BMT module instruction)
- Auditing 40-hour mediator training
- Completing a minimum of two mediations per year

* It is the student's responsibility to log these hours and report to the practicum supervisor

General Practicum Guidelines

- Aim to complete the practicum process within a two-year period.
- CMS reserves the right to assign sessions for observation and mediation to practicum participants on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the best interests of all parties involved.
 - CMS assesses practicum students on an ongoing basis for skill acquisition. We will provide feedback regarding skills we see demonstrated and those which need additional development.
- **Enjoy the process and never hesitate to ask questions, ideally open-ended!**



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Definitions of Common DRC Terms

Active/Inactive: Active: continues to be engaged on a regular basis as defined by each center. Inactive: is no longer engaged on a continuing regular basis as defined by each center.

Certification: Recognition of successful completion of Practicum qualifying an individual to mediate with the DRC issuing the certification.

Continuing Education: Additional training/education that is completed by a certified mediator to remain current and up to date in the field.

Ethics/Standards: Standards are those basic practices all mediators are asked to support and adhere to. Ethics are the written and possibly unwritten moral requirements under which we operate. "Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators" are as set and adopted by the American Arbitration Association, American Bar Association and the Association for Conflict Resolution.

Intake/Case Management: Intake /case management includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Initial contact with clients seeking services.
2. Contact with all parties to determine willingness to participate and appropriateness of case for mediation.
3. Scheduling first session and collection of any fees that may be required prior to session.
4. Final disposition of the case. Which may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. *tracking progress of case*
 - b. *conducting follow up where necessary*
 - c. *filing documents in office*
 - d. *recording statistics on computer*
 - e. *rescheduling sessions*
 - f. *confirmation with all parties*
 - g. *closing the file*

Intern (Practicum Intern): A person trained in Basic Mediation who has been "accepted" into a program working toward certification as a mediator. (Suggestion to use "student" or "practicum participant" instead.)

Mediator Practitioner: A practicing mediator who has been certified by a DRC.

Mediator Style vs. Standards: Standards are those basic practices all mediators are asked to support and adhere to. Style is the manner of each mediator personality in which that is accomplished.



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Mentor Mediator/Senior Mediator: A mediator meeting the following minimum qualifications:

- Basic Certification by a DRC.
- Trained and experienced in the specialized area of mediation being mentored (i.e. Family Law, VOM, Workplace, etc.)
- Proficient in his or her craft.
- Adheres to WMA Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators.
- 24 hours minimum additional continuing education hours (exclusive of Family Training and VOM Training).

Additional qualities beneficial for a mentor mediation practitioner to possess and utilize are:

- o Ability to create a positive mentor relationship.
- o Ability to give and receive constructive feedback.
- o Flexibility to work with a variety of different mediator styles, skill levels, and personalities.
- o Patience.

Practicum: The program an intern completes to become a certified mediator practitioner. The practicum involves additional training, observing and co-mediating cases.

Trainee: A person who has completed Basic Mediation Training.



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Quick Reference Guide to Practicum Requirements

Pre-Requisites	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Maintaining Certification
Completion of a 40 hour Basic Mediation Training	20+ hours of Observation	12+ hours of Co-Mediation (6-8 cases)	12+ hours of Co-Mediation (6-8 cases)	12+ hours of continuing Ed.
Completed of BMT Exam	Small Claims Trial Observation & Reflection	Case manage 2 cases under CMS Supervision (including intake)	1 Solo Mediation	Auditing BMT
Interview with Practicum Supervisor	Solo Mock Mediation	Solo Mock Mediation	12+ hours of additional education	Minimum of 2 mediations per year



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