

Why mediation?

When parents find themselves sharing a child between two homes the challenges and emotions that occur often result in conflict between the parents. How parents deal with conflict has a profound influence on children. Mediation is one way for parents to resolve these conflicts in a way that allows children to have positive relationships with both parents.

Who are the mediators?

Our mediators are trained, experienced mediators approved by the Kansas Supreme Court. They have been selected because of their extensive experience with domestic and family issues.

Mission

The mission of Douglas County Domestic Mediation Services is to provide children with the opportunity to develop and maintain positive relationships with each of their parents through the development of a mutually acceptable plan for parenting.

To schedule mediation contact:

Douglas County District Court
Trustee's Office
785.832.5315

Douglas County District Court

District Court Trustee
111 East 11th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044
785-832-5315

Diane Oakes
DC Mediation Services
Coordinator
785.221.6672
doakes120@yahoo.com

Douglas County Domestic Mediation Services



Douglas County District Court
111 East 11th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044



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Douglas County District Court
Trustee's Office
785.832.5315

What is mediation?

Mediation is a way for parents who disagree to discuss their problem with the help of a third party who will not take sides. The parents, and not the mediator, make the decision on what is best for their children. The mediator assists the parents by helping define the issue, assisting in communication, and suggesting possible alternatives or solutions.

Mediation...

- can be quicker and cost less than going to court where a judge determines the outcome.
- Promotes creative solutions specific to your children's needs.
- Considers challenges parents face and works to find solutions everyone can live with.

How much time does it take?

Each parent will meet with the mediator for one hour to define the issues and then both parents together will meet with the mediator for a two hour session to address the parents' concerns. Additional sessions may be scheduled as needed.

How much does it cost?

The cost of mediation services is determined on an hourly basis according to your income. (This payment schedule stands, regardless of prior court orders to equally share costs.) Your annual income is determined by either a recent pay stub you provide or your most recent child support worksheet filed with the clerk of court. You must pay for services prior to the start of each session. Additional fees may be assessed for work done by the mediator outside of the mediation session (e.g., developing agreements, conferring with attorneys, etc.)

Fee Schedule

effective July 1, 2021

Individual Gross Income	Hourly Fee for Mediation <small>Fees are per person and are payable at the start of each session. On average, allow for a one hour individual session and a two hour joint session.</small>
Under \$20,000	\$30
\$20,001—\$35,000	\$50
\$35,001—\$50,000	\$70
\$50,001 and above	\$125

Additional fees may be assessed for work done by the mediator outside of the mediation session (e.g., developing agreements, conferring with attorneys, etc.) Ask your mediator for details.

Is mediation mandatory?

Douglas County Local Court Rule 11(A)(8) provides parties to a newly filed contested divorce or paternity action case involving issues of child custody, parenting schedules and/or parenting rights must attempt to settle the issues through mediation prior to setting the case for final hearing. The court will not set a divorce, annulment, separate maintenance action or post paternity proceeding involving minor children of the relationship for final hearing until the parents have complied with this rule. The parties may elect to choose either (1) a mutually agreed upon specific private mediator or (2) a mediator from Douglas County Domestic Mediation Services can be assigned.

Local Court Rule 11(C) provides parties in post-divorce cases involving issues other than enforcing parenting time are subject to the mandatory mediation requirements of Local Court Rule 11(A)(8). Parents with issues concerning enforcement of parenting time in a post-divorce proceeding may agree to mediate those issues.

If the parties choose to use Douglas County Domestic Mediation Services, the court will direct them to the District Court Trustee to be assigned a mediator. Each parent must contact their assigned mediator within three days of the court's order.

What can I expect from mediation?

During mediation, the mediator guides communication and insures everyone is heard. Issues are discussed one at a time, solutions explored and negotiated. The mediator may offer suggestions but the final agreement is up to the parents. In other words, the mediator controls the process, but the parents decide the outcome.

At the end of a successful mediation parents will have a written agreement on how they will parent their child. Once the agreement is signed by both parents and approved by the judge it becomes binding. Parents are encouraged to submit the agreements to their attorneys for review. If parents do not have attorneys, the mediator will explain how to submit the agreement to the court.