



## Clarifying Mediation...

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Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process in which a neutral third party assists in the negotiation of a dispute.

The goal of mediation is to find common ground for agreement so that issues can be resolved and relationships can be preserved.

The mediator helps the parties identify and explore options in order to arrive at an agreement. The confidential nature of the process encourages the parties to speak openly about sensitive issues.

Mediation is an alternative to expensive litigation and can usually be conducted in one session. The mediator is not an arbitrator or judge and has no authority to impose a solution, but is there to control the mediation process and promote discussion and communication between the parties.

The parties involved must arrive at their own solution.

## Who Will Mediate?

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Someone assigned by the Program Coordinator will be the impartial third party to conduct the session, which usually last approximately two hours.

## How It Works...

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Either party to a conflict may request the mediation process. After a request is received by the Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program (AAMP), participants will be contacted by an AAMP representative. All parties will be notified of the time and location of the session. The mediator is in charge of the session.

All parties are given an opportunity to make a statement and express their feelings about the situation. Issues are clarified and solutions explored.

## What happens if an agreement is not reached?

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If a solution is not reached, the outcome will simply be an "as was" situation before mediation began. Parties will retain all options to seek a solution through legal means.

## Benefits of Mediation...

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- Participants determine the solution
- Confidential
- Voluntary
- Preserves relationships
- Informal and private
- Treats all parties with dignity and respect
- Alternative to litigation
- Provides a neutral setting to discuss real needs and issues
- High success rate
- No cost to participants
- Focuses on the future, not the past

## What Is The Cost of Mediation?

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Currently there is no charge for mediation services.