

Benefits of Mediation

- A cost-effective way to reach agreement
- A courteous forum for communication
- An alternative to trial
- A focus on your child(ren)'s best interest
- Reduced feelings of anger, anxiety, and frustration
- Confidentiality
- A customized plan that both parties agree to

How can I schedule?

Scheduling begins with an initial phone conversation. An intake counselor will make sure your situation is appropriate for mediation, provide an overview of the process and scheduling requirements, and answer any questions you may have. If you decided to open a case, it will be important for you to have the current mailing address and phone numbers for yourself and the other person in the dispute.

- Mediations may take place online or in Everett, Mount Vernon or at partner sites in Island County.
- Depending on the location, mediations may take place during weekdays, evenings, or Saturday mornings.
- Mediations are charged per session, with the fee being split between the parties. Low-income individuals may be request a financial hardship application.

CONTACT US

EVERETT

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Everett WA 98201
drcinfo@voaww.org

MOUNT VERNON

117 N. First Street Suite #30
Mount Vernon WA 98273
(Carnation Building)
skagitdrc@voaww.org

Snohomish County

425-339-1335, option 5

Skagit County

360-542-8487, option 5

Island County / Toll Free

800-280-4770, option 5

voaww.org/drc

Contacting the DRC early in the court process can help you meet the court requirement without need a continuance of your case. Please allow at least **6 weeks notice** prior to a scheduled trial date.



OF SNOHOMISH, ISLAND
AND SKAGIT COUNTIES

MANDATORY MEDIATION

IN DIVORCE & PARENTING
PLAN CASES



What is mediation?

Mediation is a confidential process that involves both parties meeting together with neutral mediators who help you discuss the issues around your dispute: divorce, parenting plan, etc.

During a mediation, you and the other person will have the opportunity to express your view of the issues and discuss how you would like to see the disagreements resolved. The mediators will help both of you create a list of items to discuss and assist you in identifying your concerns, thoughts, and ideas.

The mediators do not take sides, give advice or make decisions for you. They will help you brainstorm options and find solutions that are agreeable to both parties.

The DRC encourages all clients to consult legal counsel prior to their mediation. Mediators will not act as attorneys or judges and will not provide legal advice during the session.

Be Prepared

Documents to assist you in negotiations may be requested prior to the mediation. This may include temporary or proposed parenting plans, worksheets listing assets & liabilities, financial documents, etc.

Mandatory Dispute Resolution

Local court rules for Snohomish, Island & Skagit counties require contested family issues related to **divorce, parentage, or other child custody actions** to participate in an alternative dispute resolution.

Mediating with the DRC fulfills that requirement.

What can be mediated?

- A new parenting plan or the modification of an existing plan including:
 - residential schedule
 - holidays & vacations
 - transportation
 - relocation
- Division of property and/or debt
- Spousal maintenance
- Communication
- Co-parenting

What can't be mediated?

Mediation cannot be used to calculate or modify child support. Only the repayment of back child support can be negotiated in mediation.

Work together and develop an agreeable parenting plan now.

