



Mediation at Work Service

Provided by the Devon Wellbeing Hub

What is mediation?

Workplace misunderstandings and conflicts can cause considerable stress to those involved. As disagreement and tension deepens, complaints and even disciplinary procedures can be invoked. Mediation is a voluntary, informal and confidential process.

At the [Devon Wellbeing Hub](#), we provide mediation for colleagues working in eligible health and social care organisations in Devon.

Our trained mediators facilitate meetings between colleagues, who are in conflict, to work out a mutually acceptable way forward that will address issues, ideally before they escalate. Mediation may also be used after formal HR processes have been completed, to restore the working relationship.

The focus of mediation is on future behaviour, rather than that of the past. The emphasis is on finding a win-win solution. Mediation is about building and maintaining good, positive, professional working relationships. Either colleague may end the mediation at any time and explore other ways to settle their difficulties.

When should I access mediation?

Mediation is appropriate when:



Those in conflict are willing to reach a resolution



There is no formal HR or other action taking place that would counteract the mediation process, e.g. grievance, disciplinary action, tribunal or court case



The source of the problem is not a larger organisational or management issue

What happens in mediation?

The process is often facilitated by two mediators. The mediator(s) will first meet with each colleague separately via an online appointment. This is an opportunity for each person to talk about the problem as they see it and establish what they want as an outcome. After all participants confirm that they are happy for the mediation to go ahead, a face-to-face meeting is convened with the mediator(s).

In this meeting, each person is allowed uninterrupted time to talk about how they perceive the problem and the circumstances around the situation that needs to be resolved, e.g. communication styles, shared understanding, etc whilst the other listens. Participants have the opportunity to talk to each other in a supported way, which develops clearer understanding and problem solving approaches. It also highlights areas of consensus and contingencies if the agreement breaks down.

These discussions form the basis of the written mediation agreement. This agreement is drawn up by those receiving mediation, who decide and approve the content. Subject to consent from both participants, the mediation agreement can be shared with a third parties (such as line managers), who will support them in the day-to-day implementation of their agreement.

If participants would it find it helpful to have a follow-up session to check the agreement is holding, this can be arranged.

How do I access the mediation service?

You can approach your manager and ask to be referred, or they may suggest mediation to you.

If the dispute is with your manager, you can approach their line manager or contact HR.

The referrer will need to have gained consent from all participants involved before we will make contact.

Please note, you **cannot self-refer** to our mediation service. We can only accept referrals from HR or management.

The Devon Wellbeing Hub is free, confidential and here to help you while you care for others.