**Mediation Fact Sheet**

**What Is Mediation?**

Mediation is a facilitated conversation by an objective certified professional mediator who is trained to assist two or more parties in a dispute. Mediators facilitate a process in which both parties are heard and then have the opportunity to reach agreements about those items most important to them.

**Why Has Your Case Been Selected for Mediation?**

The Intermountain Fair Housing Council is recommending your case for mediation because we believe it is in your best interests to resolve the dispute at this early stage of the conflict. Conflicts typically follow a progression:

* Disagreement occurs
* Feelings intensify
* Positions harden and each party believes his or her position is the only right answer
* Communication stops
* Dehumanizing occurs
* Punishing emerges
* Both parties experience negative consequences

**Why Is Mediation in Your Best Interests?**

If you are able to reach agreement, you will often avoid a long and costly Fair Housing case. Some parties in Fair Housing cases have to pay for an attorney to assist them. Fair Housing cases may result in considerable fines as well.

Sometimes mediation allows you to avoid a small claims case. Typically small claims cases are for amounts of money under $5,000 and require you to spend nearly a full day in court. Losers in small claims cases may appeal requiring both parties to appear again. All legal processes can be very stressful for both the parties involved.

Ask yourself if the conflict you are involved in is worth a considerable amount of time and money or if it would be more effective to resolve it now.

**When is Mediation most likely to be successful?**

Both parties are willing to hear and attempt to understand the other’s point of view.

Both parties are willing to give a little and if they cannot get what they want, decide on the next best alternative. Sometimes compromise is required.

**How Does Mediation Work?**

Typically, the parties meet face to face at the Fair Housing Council office or another neutral agreed upon location. If the Mediator feels it would be more effective, sometimes mediators will speak to the parties individually and then negotiate back and forth between the parties either in person or by telephone.

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