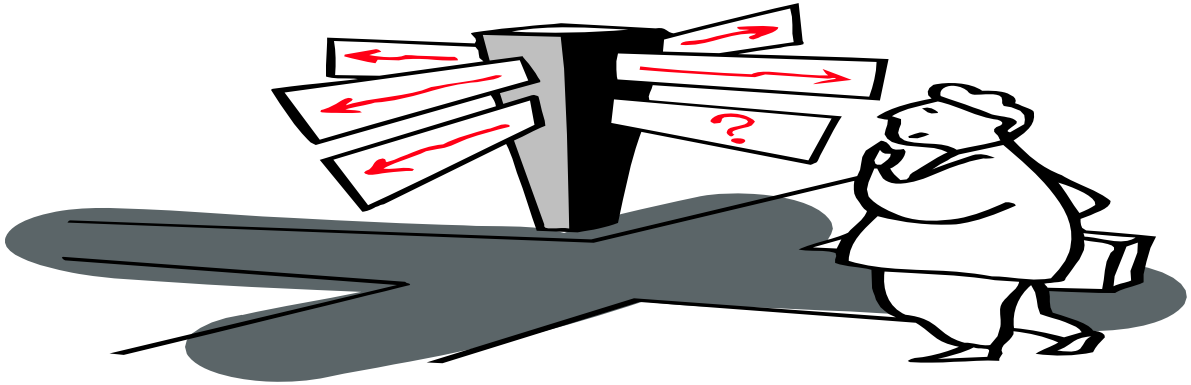


Involved in a Dispute? Don't know where to turn?



Contact the Community Information and Referral Center

We can:

- educate** you on ways to resolve your dispute
- contact** other services within Multi-Door and the Court
- locate** legal, government, or social services resources
- help** you understand your problem better by providing you with information

We can help you with:

- consumer-** merchant, home improvement, and auto repair
- landlord & tenant-** security deposits, and repairs
- neighborhood disputes-** dogs, loud noises, trees, and property
- family problems-** child or spousal support, custody, visitation and divorce issues

This office does not handle any criminal matters.

Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division

Community Information and Referral Program

Superior Court of the District of Columbia,

Bldg. A, 515 5th Street, NW, Room 114

(Use the Police Memorial Entrance)

Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00pm

(call or walk in, no appointment necessary)

(202) 879-1549, fax (202) 879-9458

FREE AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE

(See Back)

HOW TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS

- I. TALK DIRECTLY: Assuming that there is no threat of physical violence, talk directly to the person with whom you have the problem. Direct conversation is much more effective than sending a letter, banging on the wall, throwing a rock or complaining to everyone else.
- II. CHOOSE A GOOD TIME: Plan to talk to the other person at the right time and allow yourselves time for a thorough discussion. Don't start talking about the conflicts just as the other person is leaving for work, after you have had a terrible day, or right before you have to make dinner. Try to talk in a quiet place where you can both be comfortable and undisturbed for as long as the discussion takes.
- III. PLAN AHEAD: Think out what you want to say ahead of time. State clearly what the problem is and how it affects you.
- IV. DON'T BLAME OR NAME CALL: Antagonizing the other person only makes it harder for him or her to hear you. Do not blame the other person for everything or begin the conversation with your opinion of what should be done.
- V. GIVE INFORMATION: Do not interpret the other person's behavior: "you are blocking my driveway on purpose just to make me mad." Instead, give information about your own feelings: "When your car blocks my driveway, I get angry because I can't get to work on time."
- VI. LISTEN: Give the other person a chance to tell his or her side of the conflict completely. Relax and listen; try to learn how the other person feels.
- VII. SHOW THAT YOU ARE LISTENING: Although you may not agree with what is being said, tell the other person that you hear him or her and are glad that you are discussing the problem together.
- VIII. TALK IT ALL THROUGH: Once you start, get all of the issues and feelings out into the open. Don't leave out the part that seems too "difficult" to discuss or too "insignificant" to be important. Your solution will work best if all issues are discussed thoroughly.
- IX. WORK ON A SOLUTION: When you have reached this point in the discussion, start working on a solution. Two or more people cooperating are much more effective than one person telling another to change. Be specific: "I will turn my music off at midnight" is better than a vague statement: "I won't play loud music anymore."
- X. FOLLOW THROUGH: Agree to check with each other at specific times to make sure that the agreement is still working.....then really do it.