



Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice

CRS Mediation of Community Racial Disputes and Conflicts

The Community Relations Service (CRS) provides mediation services to help communities resolve conflicts and disputes based on race, color, and national origin.

CRS provides mediation services under Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which authorizes “. . . assistance to communities and persons therein in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin which impair the rights of persons in such communities under the Constitution and laws of the United States or which affect or may affect interstate commerce” (42 U.S.C. 2000g).

CRS mediation services are offered at no charge. Participation in the mediation process is strictly voluntary. Parties who join in mediation are expected to engage in good faith negotiations, to work cooperatively to arrive at mutually satisfactory solutions, and to respect jointly established ground rules. Proceedings in mediation sessions remain legally privileged under the Federal Rules of Evidence, i.e., evidence, conduct, or statements made in mediation negotiations may not be admitted for use in subsequent legal or administrative proceedings.

Ground Rules and Procedures for Mediation

- ❖ Mediation is a voluntary process by which the parties involved attempt to resolve issues through discussion, clarification, and negotiation. In advance of the first joint session, the mediator will meet with each group to understand its needs, positions, and interests on the issues. Based on these discussions, the mediator will prepare an agenda for joint negotiations that will be approved by all participating parties.
- ❖ The mediator schedules, arranges, and chairs joint mediation sessions. The mediator is a neutral and impartial party whose only interest is helping the parties find mutually acceptable solutions to the issues in mediation. By law, the mediator must hold as confidential any disclosed information.
- ❖ Mediation is conducted by representative negotiating groups, each of which typically consists of three to five members who are expected to participate in all negotiations. One member from each team serves as chairperson and usually leads the group’s participation in negotiations. Each group is expected to represent the interests and concerns of its membership or parent body in seeking a negotiated settlement. Final authority to approve an agreement may rest with the larger membership or parent body.
- ❖ Joint mediation sessions are typically held in a neutral setting, usually for no more than three hours. In some cases, however, it may be desirable to hold longer sessions, or to schedule them in a concentrated time frame or on consecutive days. Sometimes, it may be necessary to recess sessions for a time to consult with the parties or advisors, or to consider draft proposals.
- ❖ During mediation sessions, any group or the mediator may request a caucus for members to consult privately with one another. The mediator is available to join caucuses, if requested.
- ❖ Mediation sessions are closed to the news media and other outside parties. While mediation is underway, participants should not discuss the content of the proceedings or positions of the parties with the media or others who are not directly involved. Sometimes the mediator will respond to inquiries from the media and will refrain from commenting on substantive matters.
- ❖ Matters agreed upon in mediation may be set forth in a written document signed by the parties and witnessed by the mediator.
- ❖ CRS mediators recognize the critical and sensitive nature of their activities, and abide by all professional standards of conduct.

CRS OFFICES

Community Relations Service

600 E Street, NW, Suite 6000
Washington, D.C. 20530
202/305-2935
202/305-3009 (FAX)

Regional Offices

New England Regional Office

(ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI)

Community Relations Service
408 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 222
Boston, MA 02110
617/424-5715
617/424-5727 (FAX)

Northeast Regional Office

(NY, NJ, VI, PR)

Community Relations Service
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 36-118
New York, NY 10278
212/264-0700
212/264-2143 (FAX)

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)

Community Relations Service
2nd and Chestnut Streets, Suite 208
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215/597-2344
215/597-9148 (FAX)

Southeast Regional Office

(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Community Relations Service
75 Piedmont Ave, NE, Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303
404/331-6883
404/331-4471 (FAX)

Midwest Regional Office

(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)

Community Relations Service
55 W. Monroe Street, Suite 420
Chicago, IL 60603
312/353-4391
312/353-4390 (FAX)

Southwest Regional Office

(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

Community Relations Service
1420 W. Mockingbird Lane, Suite 250
Dallas, TX 75247
214/655-8175
214/655-8184 (FAX)

Central Regional Office

(IA, KS, MO, NE)

Community Relations Service
1100 Main Street, Suite 320
Kansas City, MO 64105-2112
816/426-7434
816/426-7441 (FAX)

Rocky Mountain Regional Office

(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)

Community Relations Service
1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 650
Denver, CO 80204-3584
303/844-2973
303/844-2907 (FAX)

Western Regional Office

(AZ, CA, GU, HI, NV)

Community Relations Service
888 S. Figueroa Street, Suite 1880
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213/894-2941
213/894-2880 (FAX)

Northwest Regional Office

(AK, ID, OR, WA)

Community Relations Service
915 Second Avenue, Suite 1808
Seattle, WA 98174
206/220-6700
206/220-6706 (FAX)

Field Offices

Community Relations Service
51 SW First Ave, Suite 624
Miami, FL 33130
305/536-5206
305/536-6778 (FAX)

Community Relations Service
211 W. Fort Street, Suite 1404
Detroit, MI 48226
313/226-4010
313/226-2568 (FAX)

Community Relations Service
515 Rusk Avenue, Suite 12605
Houston, TX 77002
713/718-4861
713/718-4862 (FAX)

Community Relations Service
120 Howard Street, Suite 790
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/744-6565
415/744-6590 (FAX)

CRS Customer Service Standards

Our goal is to provide sensitive and effective conflict prevention and resolution services. CRS will meet the following standards:

- We will clearly explain the process that CRS uses to address racial and ethnic conflicts and our role in that process.
- We will provide opportunities for all parties involved to contribute to and work toward a solution to the racial or ethnic conflict.
- If you are a participant in a CRS training session or conference, you will receive timely and useful information and materials that will assist you in preventing or minimizing racial and ethnic tensions.
- We will be prepared to respond to major racial or ethnic crisis situations within 24 hours from the time when your community notifies CRS or CRS becomes aware of the crisis.
- In non-crisis situations, we will contact you within three days of when your community notifies CRS to discuss your request or when CRS becomes aware of the situation.