

Peer Mediation Program - FAQ Sheet



What is the Peer Mediation Program?

The Peer Mediation Program is a new conflict resolution resource available to all City employees. This innovative program offers an informal process for you to resolve workplace conflicts at the lowest level possible.

Employees will be provided a safe and confidential space to talk through their conflict and create solutions that can improve their working relationship with one another. Conversations are facilitated by a trained Peer Mediator outside of the party's department and management chain.

Who are the Peer Mediators?

Peer Mediators are existing City employees who have been selected through a competitive process to serve as a mediator with our program. Peer Mediators are trained extensively in mediation techniques and foundational skills to support respectful conversations. The Peer Mediator will serve as a neutral party and will help you and the other individual work through the conflict and develop balanced solutions.

The City's cohort of trained Peer Mediators represent different departments, job classes, job titles, and demographics.

How does it work?

You and the other party will engage in a 90-minute conversation with a Peer Mediator facilitating the process. This time frame often gives enough time for parties to discuss their conflict and come to a resolution. At the end of the session, you and the other party will create a set of written agreements that can help improve your working relationship and create a more positive working environment.

How much time will this take?

With the initial consultation, request for service, preliminary meeting, and mediation session, this process may take a total of 4-5 hours spread out over the course of a few weeks. Release time will be provided to you for your participation in the mediation process.

Will I need to let my supervisor know that I am participating in mediation?

Yes, in order to receive release time for the session, you will need to inform your supervisor of your participation. However, you do not need to share any details about the conflict and agreements. The Peer Mediation Program will assist you in providing your supervisor with information about the program, our confidentiality practice and policy, and instructions on how to approve your release time to participate in the session.

Will details of my conversation be shared with my manager or HR?

No, this is a confidential process that will only remain between you, the mediator, and the other party. Conversations are not formally documented, and any notes taken during the session will be destroyed at the end. The only information we can provide is confirmation of your participation in mediation, and if an agreement was made by the end.

For more information on our confidentiality policy, please view our [Confidentiality Agreement Form](#).

Can I bring a colleague or union rep with me?

No, the only individuals allowed in the mediation session will be the two parties in conflict and the Peer Mediator. This is an informal process and the intent is for you and your colleague to speak directly to each other in a safe and structured environment. The conversation is confidential and will not be formally documented or reported outside of the mediation space.

The Peer Mediator will ensure that the conversation is balanced and that you have the space to communicate your needs and be heard. The Peer Mediator will support you in creating a solution that you feel is fair, balanced, and will help you and your colleague work better together.

Who do I contact?

For more information about the program or mediation services, please contact our Program Manager, Joyce Ganthavorn, at joyce.ganthavorn@sfgov.org or 415-557-4988.