



# Family mediation and independent legal advice services

## What is mediation?

Family mediation is a voluntary process where a mediator helps disputing parents come up with workable solutions that focus on the best interests of their children.

Mediation services are delivered by Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) mediators and also by the Ministry of the Attorney General's free on-site mediators in courthouses and from off-site, sliding-scale mediators.

## What can mediators help you with?

- custody, access, child or spousal support matter (single issue or in combination)
- child protection matters
- creating a mediated agreement
- changing an existing agreement or order
- the court process if you haven't started your final hearing or trial



## Independent legal advice

Independent legal advice (ILA) is help from a family lawyer to make sure that you have information and advice throughout the mediation process.

If you qualify for subsidized or free mediation, a family lawyer can offer eligible mediation clients up to six hours of ILA before, during and after participating in a mediation and entering into a mediated agreement.

## This ILA can include help with:

- understanding the mediation process and your options better
- preparing for mediation
- getting a court order or binding agreement to enforce the terms of the mediation agreement
- support in custody, access, child or spousal support matters
- creating customary care agreements
- creating voluntary care agreements
- creating parenting or separation agreements
- changing existing agreements or orders

How can I find out if I am eligible?

Call 1-800-668-8258 toll-free (or 416-979-1446 in Toronto) to get legal aid help in over 200 languages.  
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

