

What are the community mediation centers?

MODR administers the MAG/R Family Mediation Program in partnership with nine community mediation centers across the state:

- Berkshire Mediation Services
- Cape Mediation
- Community Dispute Settlement Center
- Framingham Court Mediation Services, Inc.
- Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program, Inc.
- The Mediation & Training Collaborative
- North Shore Community Mediation, Inc.
- Quabbin Mediation
- Worcester Community Mediation Center

The community mediation centers provide a range of free or low cost mediation services in their local communities and courts. The centers focus on resolving conflicts in families, homes, schools, neighborhoods, and small businesses.

In the MAG/R Family Mediation Program, the centers schedule mediation, assist parents in preparing for the mediation, assign and supervise their mediators, and follow up with participants.



What is MODR?

The Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution & Public Collaboration (MODR) is an institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston. MODR's mission is to promote effective conflict resolution and collaborative practices within government and communities statewide. MODR has been serving Massachusetts citizens for twenty years.



To learn more about mediation or arrange a session:

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Massachusetts Guard & Reserves Family Mediation Program

Also serving veterans



Massachusetts Office of Dispute
Resolution & Public Collaboration
in partnership with nine
Community Mediation Centers
across the state



What is the MAG/R Family Mediation Program?

Children with divorced, separated or unmarried parents who are in the Guard, Reserves, or are veterans need workable parenting arrangements, particularly during periods of pre-deployment and post-deployment, and parents may need help putting their plans together.

The Massachusetts Guard and Reserves (MAG/R) Family Mediation Program has been created to resolve child access, visitation and parenting plan disputes for families of the MA Guard, Reserves, and veterans. Mediation services are provided by community mediation centers from across the state.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential, and flexible process in which a neutral mediator assists disputing parents come to mutually acceptable solutions. Mediation promotes communication and cooperation. It empowers people to make the decisions that affect their lives.

Mediation is NOT a determination of who is right or wrong, and the mediator is not a decision-maker. Mediation is not necessarily the end point – other rights, responsibilities, and options are still available.



What are the benefits of mediation?

- Mediation is usually less costly than going to court, both financially and emotionally.
- Mediation allows parents to retain control over the decision-making process.
- Mediation is private and informal.
- Mediation allows parents to create a parenting plan that best fits their needs and the needs of their children.
- Most people find that mediation helps to reduce hostility and support relationships.



What does mediation cost?

There is no cost to families for the first six hours of mediation. Parents may request additional mediation time, but mediation fees may be charged in the event that program funding is not available to cover the extra time.

Who are the mediators?

The mediators participating in the program are impartial individuals who are qualified to mediate in probate and family court. They have been trained in managing the mediation process, have experience mediating family cases, and have knowledge of the unique challenges facing children and youth in military families.

Mediators are assigned based on the needs of the case and the mediator's style, background, and experience.

Who can attend?

Never-married, divorced or separated parents (biological and/or adoptive) may use this program to resolve parenting plan issues.

At least one parent must a Guard or Reserve member, or a veteran. Additionally, at least one parent must be a Massachusetts resident (the other parent must be able to attend the session).

The mediation will focus on parenting time, access, and visitation but may also involve other issues. The parents, and other persons both parents feel need to be there, should attend the mediation session. Children are not usually included in mediation unless both parents feel that older children would benefit from participating.