

COMMUNITY - POLICE COMPLAINT MEDIATION

*“Helping People Talk
To People”*

Encourage and enable people who experienced a point of conflict to discuss the event in a safe and constructive environment, and better understand each other’s perspective of what took place.

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Community-Police Complaints resolved through mediation have an 85% - 90% satisfaction rate!

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Face-to-Face mediation is an opportunity to have your voice heard!

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Community Mediation Concepts – A Colorado nonprofit

303-651-3465

cmc@PoliceMediation.org

www.PoliceMediation.org

Just a bit of what we hear –

“Mediation was very helpful for me to understand the officer’s reasons for what happened.”

“I was able to talk and discuss the event with the community member; and they listened!”

(Sent in an email after the mediation)

“I just wanted to say thank you for arranging last night’s mediation. I think this is a great process that provides the opportunity to educate both police and the public as to perspectives on the other side. I believe Officer __ was sincere and forthcoming in their explanation and truly understood my situation. I believe the experience will make them a better officer and I know it will make me a better person, should I get stopped by an officer again. Once again, I thank you.”

“I found the ability for both of us to openly discuss the incident was extremely helpful. Also, the feelings and process that an officer goes through was very enlightening. I now have a better understanding of the processes. Thank you.”

Provide positive and lasting solutions because people involved and affected by the conflict are those creating the solutions. They have buy-in and commitment to the solution they work to create.

Objective | Confidential | A Real Difference | A Positive Learning Experience | More Satisfying

Reasons People Choose to Mediate –

- ◆ Mediation is an opportunity for officers and community members to hear, learn and understand the other person’s perspective.
- ◆ Mediation allows officers and community members to resolve complaints themselves, with the help of a mediator. This often provides valuable feedback on avoiding similar situations in the future and improves relationships between the police and community.
- ◆ Regain or improve confidence in the police department.
- ◆ Resolve the issue outside the formal complaint process, often in a more rewarding and meaningful manner.
- ◆ The opportunity to discuss real issues. When we’re in conflict we generally focus on our solution to the problem as we understand the situation. Life doesn’t come in “one-size-fits-all,” and neither do impactful conversations – have one!
- ◆ Facilitated Conversations are confidential and provide the opportunity for honest and direct communication.
- ◆ When both the community member and officer agree to participate in mediation, their participation will result in the community member’s complaint against the officer being dismissed.

How Mediation Works for You –

- ◆ **The complaint is selected** based upon criteria the Police Department has identified; generally, discourtesy and unprofessional behavior, racial profiling and similar type complaints.
- ◆ **We explain and answer questions** CMC contacts each person involved and explains the value of mediation & facilitated conversations. We listen to their concerns and answer any questions they may have.
- ◆ **Agreeing to Mediate**
Once the community member and officer agree to participate, mediation is scheduled at a time and place that is convenient. When the parties meet, a professional mediator helps them:
 - Set expectations that ensure a safe and respectful environment for both the community member and officer.
 - Provide an opportunity for the officer and community member to better understand each other's perspective, and what lead up to this point.
 - Rebuild trust and respect.
- ◆ **Voluntary & Confidential**
Mediations and Facilitated Conversations are voluntary, confidential and generally last sixty to ninety minutes. All we need to get started is a good-faith commitment on the parties' part.

Common Misperceptions

- ◆ "I'll be compelled to apologize or admit wrongdoing."
 - No. Mediation is a voluntary process. No one is required to say or do anything they don't choose.
- ◆ "It won't do any good. The person is unreasonable and unpleasant."
 - Generally not true. In an environment, facilitated by a professional mediator, the parties all behave in a much more constructive manner.
- ◆ "Mediation will just give them more time to complain and verbally attack."
 - No. Professional mediators are trained and responsible for managing a safe process.
- ◆ "If I speak freely and honestly my words will be construed or used against me in a legal proceeding."
 - No. The content of a mediation session is protected as confidential and not discoverable under a Colorado Statute. Each participant signs a legally binding confidentiality agreement prior to mediation.
- ◆ "What is my incentive to participate?"
 - Improved community relations between the police and citizens which leads to a safer community.
- ◆ "How can conflict be constructive?"
 - With a professional mediator in charge of the process, creative ideas are produced, lasting resolutions are made and people take personal responsibility for the outcome.