

**SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT**  
**MEDIATION PROGRAMS**

Mediation is a voluntary, flexible, and confidential process in which a neutral third party “mediator” facilitates negotiations. A mediator does not propose a judgment or provide an evaluation of the merits and value of the case. The San Francisco Superior Court provides different types of mediation programs for various civil matters as follows:

*Voluntary Civil Mediation Panel*

To help litigants and attorneys identify qualified mediators, the Superior Court maintains a list of mediation providers whose training and experience have been prescreened and approved by the Court. Parties may use the panel list as a referral resource but is up to the parties to arrange the mediation directly with the private mediation provider.

*Mediation Services*

Mediation Services is a coordinated effort of the Superior Court and The Bar Association of San Francisco (“BASF”) in which a mediator provides three hours of mediation at no charge to the parties. The mediators participating in the program have been pre-approved by BASF pursuant to strict educational and experience requirements.

*Judicial Mediation*

The Judicial Mediation program is designed to provide early mediation with over a dozen participating Superior Court judges. The Court’s ADR Administrator coordinates assignment of cases that qualify for the program.

*Self-Represented Litigants Mediation Program*

The program provides assistance to self-represented litigants so that they can effectively participate in mediation. A Mediation Advisor assists litigants in making the necessary arrangements for mediation, and in completing any court forms necessary to continue or dismiss a matter pending a mediation outcome. Mediators are available during Small Claims calendars or prior to going to trial.

*Probate Mediation*

Volunteer attorneys provide pro bono mediation for disputes involving trusts and decedents’ estates or guardianship and conservatorship matters. The judge refers the matter to mediation upon the agreement of the parties. Following the mediation, the matter is returned to court for judicial review.

*Family Law Mediation*

Unified Family Court Services (UFCS) provides free, confidential mediation. All UFCS mediators are court employees who are clinically trained in working with families. The mediator’s main focus is always on the best interests of the child. UFCS offers mediation in Family Law matters and Juvenile Dependency matters involving Child Protective Services.