

WHAT IS ORIENTATION?

Parties with Child Custody and Visitation matters must participate in the mandatory North Carolina's Custody Mediation Program in an effort to resolve their disputes without having to go through a trial in court. The first of this two-step process is the ORIENTATION SESSION. Parties in the custody case are court ordered to attend one orientation session and at least one mediation session. Orientation is usually scheduled within 30 days of the date the case is sent to the Custody Mediation Program.

The Orientation is a group presentation and is designed to provide participants with a general understanding of what Mediation involves. You will complete information necessary for the Mediator's file and you will be provided with informational material about the program as well as referrals to local resources for children and parents.

**This IS NOT your individual Mediation Session.
Your Mediation Session will be scheduled
after all parties to the case have attended Orientation.**

Notify the Mediator prior to your attendance to Orientation if you have a No Contact/Domestic Violence Protective Order that is currently in place.

Remember, if you have attended an Orientation session in the last five (5) years, you are not required to attend again. You are directed to contact the person listed on the front of this form to schedule a mediation session.

WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is a guided conversation. Custody Mediation offers a "family-friendly" way of handling a custody disagreement. The Mediator helps the parties look at their parenting concerns and the needs of the children. Mediation reduces the stress and anxiety often involved in custody disputes. It gives you, the parents, the opportunity to make the important decisions regarding your child(ren) without having to go through a trial in court.

For more information about the Custody Mediation Program, please visit:
<https://www.nccourts.gov/help-topics/family-and-children/custody-mediation>