

About Stephen Baer



Stephen Baer earned his juris doctor degree from Temple University School of Law in 1978. He began his career as an assistant district attorney in Chester County and established his suburban Philadelphia law practice shortly thereafter. In 1994, believing that there was a better way to resolve legal disputes, he began extensive training as a mediator.

As an “Advanced Practitioner” Member of the Association for Conflict Resolution, a contract mediator for the U.S. Postal Service, and a long-time member of the American, Pennsylvania, and Chester County Bar Associations, Steve brings knowledge, experience and compassion to his role as head of Mediation Resources.

Steve is a qualified mediator on both the Montgomery and Chester County custody mediation rosters and also volunteers his services to the Montgomery County Mediation Center.



Mediation successfully resolves these disputes:

Personal

Divorces
Child Custody
Spousal Support
Child Support
Division of Property
Inheritance

Business

Contract Interpretation
Labor Problems
Landlord/Tenant
Real Estate
Dissolution of Partnership
Merchant/Consumer



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When each gives a little, both get a lot.



What is Mediation?

In recent years, more and more people have sought an alternative to the traditionally adversarial legal process to resolve disputes. In mediation, the opposing parties agree to work with a neutral third party—the trained mediator—to arrive at a resolution that is fair to both sides. The mediation process promotes cooperation, not conflict, and can reduce the bitterness and stress that often accompany conventional litigation.



What are the Benefits?

Control

The parties involved, not a judge or jury, decide the outcome.

Cost

Mediation is generally less expensive than traditional legal action.

Confidentiality

In mediation, the agreements reached and the issues involved do not become part of the public record.

Civility

Mediation emphasizes cooperation, not competition.



How Does Mediation Work?

To begin the mediation process, both parties attend an orientation session with a skilled mediator to ask questions and decide if mediation is right for them.

If they agree to mediate, ongoing sessions are scheduled. During the sessions, the mediator acts as a facilitator—listening to both parties, helping them understand the issues involved, and guiding them towards a workable solution. The mediator **does not take sides** but encourages both parties to negotiate with each other constructively. Once an agreement is reached, the mediator draws up a signed document outlining the specific terms and decisions reached by the parties.



How Long Does It Take?

Every situation is different. In mediation, the parties meet with the mediator at a time and place of their choosing, for as many sessions as they need to reach an agreement or gain a better understanding of each other and clarity about their choices.

In cases where both parties are equally committed to achieving a satisfactory outcome, mediation can take far less time than traditional litigation.



Who Pays for Mediation?

Usually, both parties contribute to the cost of mediation. Mediation Resources charges a standard fee for the orientation session and an hourly rate for the sessions and preparation of the documents that follow. Fees charged by mediators are often lower than attorneys' hourly rates.



Are Mediators Certified?

They are not. However, the vast majority of reputable mediators belong to the Association for Conflict Resolution. Members may join at different levels, based on their hours of training and experience. "Advanced Practitioner" is the highest level of membership.



What is Mediation Resources?

Run by an experienced attorney and trained mediator, Stephen Baer, Mediation Resources is a privately-held suburban Philadelphia company that helps individuals and businesses create solutions to disputes they could not otherwise resolve.

