

## What is mediation?

Mediation is a process that gives you an opportunity to resolve your conflict with a police officer. You and the police officer meet in a quiet, comfortable, and private space and discuss the incident that led to the complaint. A trained mediator, who is not affiliated with the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission or the Milwaukee Police Department, guides the discussion. Mediation is voluntary for both you and the police officer. By participating in mediation, the police officer cannot be punished. The mediator is neutral—not a judge or an investigator. The mediator does not decide who is right or wrong.

## What would I gain from mediation?

The goal of mediation is understanding. In mediation, the police officer hears your views about what happened, and you hear the police officer's views. You and the police officer end the mediation when you are both satisfied that you have addressed the complaint.

## What kinds of complaints can be mediated?

In general, any complaint that does not involve a pending criminal or municipal court matter or physical injury can be mediated.

## Suggestions for a Constructive Mediation

- Be willing to offer your perspective to explain how you were affected.
- Listen— and show that you are listening.
- Don't blame or shame. Most people become defensive, rather than open to new perspectives.
- Be open to learning different perspectives.
- Be calm and focused. Everyone benefits when people concentrate on the issues at hand.
- Be prepared to work toward a solution.
- Ask for clarification. Frequently, what you don't know or understand can be the key to a solution.

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## Why Mediate an FPC Complaint?





### **Why do people like mediation?**

You and the police officer meet as equals, not as police officer and civilian. Mediation is a rare chance to speak with a police officer away from the stress and worry of the street. You can speak directly with the police officer, so you know for certain that the police officer has heard your view. You can receive an explanation from the police officer. You can learn why the police officer did what he/she did. Mediation can help you with police officers you see every day in your neighborhood. Many mediations end with a handshake.

### **Can I bring a representative or attorney to the mediation session?**

You can bring a representative or attorney to the Milwaukee Mediation Center, but they are not allowed to speak on your behalf. You can, however, stop the session at any time to consult with your representative or attorney.

### **Can the police officer use anything I say against me?**

No, mediation is a confidential process. Everyone participating in the mediation, including the mediator, must sign an Agreement to Mediate. This agreement says that you and the police officer agree that anything said in the mediation is confidential. In almost every case, the mediation concludes with an agreement by the parties that the mediation has resolved the issues between them and that there will be no further action regarding the complaint.

### **What happens to the complaint after mediation?**

Once the mediation is over, the case is closed.

### **When the incident occurred, the police officer screamed at me and became very angry. If I agree to mediate, what can be done to prevent the police officer from becoming abusive?**

The mediator will intervene immediately if the police officer becomes abusive. During a mediation, it is common for people to express strong feelings, which can be useful to clarify issues. But name-calling, yelling, and insulting speech are not permitted.

### **How long does mediation take?**

Mediations usually take about one hour. The mediator will stay with you as long as it takes if both you and the police officer are making progress.

### **How can I find out more information about mediation?**

For more information about mediation, please contact the Milwaukee Mediation Center at (414) 271-5464, or the FPC mediation coordinator, Cindy Janusz, at (414) 286-5055. Information about mediation is also available online at [www.milwaukee.gov/fpc/Complaints](http://www.milwaukee.gov/fpc/Complaints).

