

How is mediation used to make a parenting plan?

A mediator can help parents come to an agreement about custody and parenting time. The mediator can:

- Help parents talk about what will work for their children;
- Give suggestions about schedules and other details of a workable plan;
- Try to solve disagreements; and
- Write down an agreement, if reached.

What if I am worried about my safety in mediation?

Mediation is not a safe choice for everyone. Thinking about your safety before deciding to mediate is important. For more information about safety concerns, ask your Child Support Case Manager for the flyer called “Your Safety and Mediation” or you can find it online:

oregonchildsupport.gov/parentingtime

Do I have to go to mediation?

You do not have to participate in mediation through the Child Support Program. It is your choice. If you have a divorce or custody case filed in court, however, you may be ordered to attend mediation. Check with your local court about how to ask for a waiver of mediation if you have safety or other concerns. You also may want to speak with a lawyer.

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Oregon Child Support Program

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MAKING PLANS FOR PARENTING TIME



Oregon Department of Justice

Oregon Child Support Program

Supporting Parents to Support Children

PARENTING PLANS

What is a parenting plan?

A parenting plan is a written agreement between parents. It says when a child will be with each parent (parenting time) and how decisions about the child will be made. It is used when parents are not living together. Sometimes parents agree about these subjects and write their own plan. Sometimes parents use the help of a mediator or a lawyer to work out a plan. A parenting plan may also be ordered by a judge after a trial or hearing.

What are the benefits of a parenting plan?

- Children can spend time with both parents on a regular schedule.
- Parents and children will know what to expect and planning is easier.
- Parents may have fewer disagreements about contact with the children and major decisions and may get along better.
- The parent without custody may feel more involved with and committed to the children.

Can a court make a parent obey a parenting plan?

A parenting plan can be just a written agreement signed by both parents. But, a court can force a parent to obey a written agreement only if it is an order signed by a judge in a court case. A written agreement that is not a court order does not establish legal custody rights. Depending on a family's situation, a parenting plan that is a court order may be best. For information about how to file a divorce or custody case:

<http://courts.oregon.gov/OJD/OSCA/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/Pages/index.aspx>



What if I am worried about my children's safety with the other parent?

It may be best to talk to a lawyer or other professional to find out how to handle safety concerns about your children's contact with the other parent. You may be able to deal with safety issues in a parenting plan that focuses on safety. Information about "Safety-Focused Parenting Plans" is available at:

<http://courts.oregon.gov/OJD/OSCA/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/parentingplansafety.page>

If you think your children are in serious danger now, you can call a child abuse hotline for advice.

How can I get a parenting plan?

You can:

- Try to reach an agreement with the other parent
- Use the Oregon Judicial Department's online parenting plan forms
- Go to the Child Support Program website for information about free mediation
- Call a lawyer for help
- File a case in court

How do I write my own parenting plan?

Use the forms available on the Oregon Judicial Department website to choose the right plan for you and your children. Talk over options with the other parent, write down the details, sign the agreement and provide a copy to your Child Support Case Manager.

<http://courts.oregon.gov/OJD/OSCA/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/Parentingplanbasic.page>

How can the Child Support Program help me get a parenting plan?

The Child Support Program offers free mediation to parents who want to make a parenting plan. If you are interested, ask your Child Support Case Manager for a referral to a mediator in your community.

oregonchildsupport.gov/parentingtime

MEDIATION

What is mediation?

Mediation is one or more meetings with a person trained to help people work together to solve problems. What parents talk about in mediation is private. Mediators do not take sides or tell parents what they should do. Mediation may happen with everyone in the same room, in separate rooms, or over the phone. Parents do not have to reach an agreement in mediation.

