

YOUR SAFETY AND MEDIATION

A companion to the brochure, **MAKING PLANS FOR PARENTING TIME**

What if the other parent has hurt me or I am afraid of the other parent?

In mediation, it is important that you feel safe so that you can talk openly with the other parent about a parenting plan for your children. If you have been hurt or threatened by the other parent, it may be hard for you to feel safe enough to negotiate or disagree with the other parent. In some cases, mediation may not be a safe choice.

How do I decide if it is safe for me to participate in mediation?

You are the best judge of your own situation. We hope you will take a minute to think about your relationship with the other parent. Has the other parent ever:

- Physically hurt you?
- Insulted or talked down to you?
- Threatened you with harm?
- Screamed or cursed at you?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may want to talk with someone about your safety before deciding to take part in mediation.

Will the other parent know if I talk to my caseworker or a mediator about my concerns?

Your answers are private. They are just between you and your child support case manager, or your mediator if you choose to mediate. They are not shared with the other parent. The only exception is if your case manager or mediator has to report information about child abuse.

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

1-800-799-SAFE(7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224

Portland Women's Crisis Line: 503-235-5333 or toll free at 1-888-235-5333 for outside Portland area

Oregon Judicial Department Domestic Violence Webpage:

courts.oregon.gov/OJD/OSCA/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/pages/domesticviolence.aspx

Oregon Department of Human Services Domestic

Violence Webpage: oregon.gov/dhs/abuse/domestic/Pages/index.aspx

Do I have to mediate if I do not feel safe?

Mediation through this program is voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you do decide to participate, you can end mediation at any time.

Note: If parents have an open custody case with the court, mediation is sometimes required. Your local Court staff can give you information about your options if mediation has been ordered and you have safety concerns.

Who can I talk to about my safety concerns?

If you have a domestic violence advocate or other support person please talk with them about your safety concerns. You can also talk with someone at one of the numbers or websites listed below. Your caseworker or mediator can give you information about places in your community where you can find help.

What if I want to participate in mediation, but I am worried about my safety?

Some parents that have experienced domestic violence still want to participate in mediation. If you decide you want to mediate, but are worried about your safety, you can ask your mediator about safer ways to participate. You can also get advice about your situation from people at the numbers listed earlier on this page.

What if the other parent and I do not agree on a plan for our children in mediation?

You are never required to reach an agreement in mediation. If you and the other parent do not agree, you can speak with your mediator about other options that may be available.

If you are experiencing violence now, from someone besides the other parent in this case, please think about talking with someone about your safety.



Oregon Department of Justice

Oregon Child Support Program

Supporting Parents to Support Children

oregonchildsupport.gov/