

15th District Court Small Claims Mediation Program Description Using MI-RESOLVE



Your case has been ordered to mediation using the MI-Resolve Mediation Platform. With MI-Resolve, you can go online to negotiate directly with the other party, or a mediator from the Dispute Resolution Center can help resolve your dispute remotely. You do not have to go to the courthouse. The service is free and available online 24/7. MI-Resolve replicates in-person mediation, only it takes place entirely online, and all communication is in text format, such as typing responses on your computer.

A short how-to video about MI-Resolve can be viewed at courts.mi.gov/HowToMIResolve

If you cannot reach a decision with the other party through this platform, you can ask for a mediator to be involved. Mediation is an effective method of resolving disputes that provides parties with the opportunity to reach mutually-satisfactory agreements in a non-adversarial manner.

Please read the following information about the 15th District Court's Mediation Program, including a description of the mediation process, a procedural overview, and a summary of your procedural options.



What is Mediation?

The Michigan Court Rules define “mediation” as a process in which a neutral third party (mediator) facilitates communication between parties, assists in identifying issues, and helps to explore solutions to promote a mutually-acceptable settlement. Unlike litigation, where one party wins and one loses, mediation helps parties reach their own mutually-satisfactory resolution in a non-adversarial manner.

It's effective. About 80% of all mediated cases end in agreement. In fact, the likelihood of settling a dispute to both parties' satisfaction through mediation is much higher than in small claims court. Mediation also reduces the likelihood that the problem will occur again.



Who Will Mediate My Case?

The 15th District Court has a referral agreement with the Dispute Resolution Center of Washtenaw County (“Center”) to conduct mediation. The Center of Washtenaw County is a Community Dispute Resolution Program funded in part by the State of Michigan. There is no charge to the parties for mediation conducted by the Center. All mediators used by the Center meet or exceed the qualifications required under the Michigan Court Rules. Small claims mediators have completed a 40-hour training program and a 10-hour internship.

The mediator will review the case with you. Both sides will have an opportunity to discuss their views about the case. The mediator will assist in negotiations to find a solution that satisfies the needs of all parties. Mediators may speak with each party privately to explore alternatives, if it is reasonable or necessary.

Mediation is confidential and mediators can neither be called as witnesses nor have their records subpoenaed if the case is not resolved at mediation.

Here is the Process for using MI-Resolve:

1. Go to MI-Resolve and register your dispute. You will need the email addresses for all parties involved. You can access the system through a computer, tablet, or smartphone at www.courtinnovations.com/MIWDRC
2. Once everyone is registered in MI-Resolve, you may begin mediating with the other party.
3. If you reach an agreement, MI-Resolve will generate the necessary forms for you to file with the court. Make sure you file these forms with the court after mediation because it may end your court case.
4. If the other party does not want to use MI-Resolve, or if you do not reach an agreement, you still have the right to pursue your dispute in court.
5. The process is confidential. The court will only know whether or not you participated in MI-Resolve. If you reach a mediation agreement, that agreement is also confidential, and the details of the agreement do not need to be disclosed to the court.

If you have any questions about the 15th District Court Small Claims Mediation Program, please contact the Civil Division during normal business hours at (734) 794-6752 (select option 4 to speak to a clerk).