



How to Prepare for Mediation

CHECKLIST

- Find out what you can about the request for mediation and any claims behind it.** This information helps you identify the documents you will need to review before the mediation session, and the individuals you may need to consult, such as Personnel or the JAG Office, or others from your chain of command.
- Collect information and refresh your memory.** This information provides the basis for your opening statement, specifically what you want to acknowledge about the other party, an explanation about events and actions, and what you want to communicate about your interests and expectations.
- Write your opening statement.** Use it to set a tone for the mediation, acknowledge the other person, explain agency decisions, and to communicate your interests and expectations. (To learn more, see the segments on *Preparing and Delivering an Opening Statement* from the AT THE TABLE series.)
- Consider your interests and identify your options and “bottom line.”** Interests define what is important to you. There are multiple ways to satisfy them and they suggest possible options for resolution. (To learn more, see the segments on *How to Expand Options for Better Mediation* from the AT THE TABLE series.)
- Consider what may be the interests of the other party.** Identify what you believe the other party’s least acceptable options might be, i.e., their “bottom line”. This will help you identify options that may be mutually agreeable. (To learn more, see the segments on *How to Expand Options for Better Mediation* from the AT THE TABLE series.)
- Clarify your negotiating authority.** Your authority may be limited by Air Force policy and by others who have a stake in the outcome. Determine the scope of your authority before coming to mediation.
- Assemble the documents you need.** These might be documents pertaining to the case, such as time and attendance records, or Air Force policy manuals and standard operating procedures.
- Coordinate with supporting personnel.** As needed, seek guidance from Personnel, legal positions from the JAG Office, and mediation support from the NDR team or other subject matter experts. Bring contact information with you to mediation in case you need to consult them during the session.
- Self-Check.** Gauge how the upcoming mediation may be affecting you. Use your preparation time to focus your energies and talk through and revise your approach to the mediation with appropriate personnel.
- Confirm date, time and location, and plan to arrive at least a few minutes early.**
- Manage your schedule to be fully present.** Clear your calendar and inform your team and superiors you will be unavailable. Turn off your cell phone alerts and return to the session on time after breaks.
- (Optional): Talk with the mediator in advance of the mediation.** If you have questions or concerns about the mediation process, reach out to the mediator to address them in advance.