



“WHERE FAMILIES COMING APART COME TOGETHER”

Great Lakes Legal - Mediation Division (MD)

Conversations can become difficult when making decisions on how to care for an aging loved one. Issues ranging from distribution of caregiving responsibilities, safety and health concerns and finances often lead to disagreements. Frequently, unresolved issues that have been simmering below the surface for years now result in painful conflict. When communication is strained, critical decisions are often put on hold. A skilled elder mediator can facilitate communication so necessary decisions can be made.

What Is Mediation?

Mediation is an intervention used to resolve disputes between two or more parties concluding with concrete results.

It is also a valuable tool to reduce the chances of elder abuse and neglect. If the older adult is cognitively unable to participate, family members are still encouraged to seek mediation.

What Happens in Elder Mediation?

With an impartial ear, the mediator listens to the issues, helps individuals to identify goals, encourages consideration of all options, addresses hurt feelings and clears up misunderstandings. The mediator does not “take sides”. The elder mediator facilitates a purposeful and directed conversation where all family members and additional participants are encouraged to express their interests and concerns, focusing on the needs, rights, and interests of the elder loved one. The participants are encouraged to come up with their own creative and lasting solutions to solve conflicts. Individuals’ perceptions of fairness are critical and must be considered in all discussions. The idea is to have a solution that everyone accepts but is in the best interest of the older adult.

Where appropriate and agreed upon by all, professionals such as attorneys, geriatric care managers or financial planners are invited to participate. Their expertise, coupled with their insight into the situation, is often very helpful and may even be critical to finding a resolution.

At the end of mediation, an agreement is drawn up to include a task and “to-do list” for each individual participant making it easier to proceed with next steps and future decision making.

What Is Elder Mediation?

Elder Mediation provides a comfortable, safe and neutral forum for family decision making. It is an area of mediation that focuses on meeting the needs of older adults and their families by resolving conflict between their family, their caregivers, or their care team when communication becomes difficult.

When Is Mediation Appropriate

Ideally, mediation would occur at the beginning of the decision-making process - when individuals are fact finding or struggling with various options. It is also an effective tool to identify and/or prevent elder abuse and neglect. Multiple studies have demonstrated how useful mediation can be in reducing the chances of abuse and neglect. Many people find the mediation process a useful tool to avoid the costly, intrusive legal system and focus on current matters rather than issues of the past. Of course, if you or someone you know has been struggling for some time, mediation can still be a practical option for resolving an older adult's challenges.

What Is the Cost of Mediation Services and Where Are They Provided

Meetings are informal and are held in locations which meet the family's needs, including mediators' offices, healthcare settings and senior living facilities. Mediation fees are appropriated amongst the participating parties and based on a sliding fee, reduced-rate according to the older adult's income.

Types of Issues Handled By GLL-MD

- Family Disputes
- Landlord - Tenant
- Nursing Home and Long Term Care Issues
- Guardianship/ Conservatorship

Other Services GLL-MD Offers

- Elder Abuse Prevention Trainings
- Seminars and Special Programs
- Trainings to Individuals, Agencies, and Organizations
- Family Resource Center



Great Lakes Legal - Mediation Division (GLL-MD)

Redford Community Center

12121 Hemingway

Redford, MI 48239

313-937-8282



The Mediation Division (MD) is an entity of Great Lakes Legal, Inc. (GLL) which is the sister agency of Neighborhood Legal Services Michigan (NLSM) Elder Law & Advocacy Center (ELAC). NLSM is a 501 (c) (3) program established in 1966 to provide legal assistance to disadvantaged populations. NLSM established Great Lakes Legal, Inc. Elder Law Division and Mediation Divisions to serve residents of all ages and their caregivers throughout southeast Michigan.



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10 Things You Should Know About Great Lakes Legal - Mediation Division (GLL - MD)

1. **GLL-MD** offers elder mediation which focuses on meeting the needs of older adults and their families.
2. **GLL-MD** offers services which include but are not limited to: family/individual disagreements, nursing home/long term care concerns, estate/trust/probate planning, guardianship/conservatorship options, health/medical accommodations, and landlord-tenant matters.
3. **GLL-MD** guides families through elder care conversations to help resolve conflict between the older adult's family, their caregivers, or their care team.
4. **GLL-MD** recognizes elder mediation as a valuable tool that increases support by minimizing caregiver stress and reducing the chances of elder abuse and neglect.
5. **GLL-MD** helps older adults or individuals avoid the intrusive, costly legal system.
6. **GLL-MD** provides skilled elder mediators who equip families with useful information to help them make necessary decisions.
7. **GLL-MD** helps participants come up with lasting solutions to solve conflicts with the goal of arriving at the best interest of the older adult and a solution that everyone accepts.
8. **GLL-MD** encourages all family members and additional participants to express their concerns focusing on the needs of the older adult.
9. **GLL-MD** invites families to seek mediation as soon as possible, however; if you or someone you know has been struggling for some time, mediation can still be a practical option for resolving challenges.
10. If you know there is a dispute, call us at **(313) 937-8282**.

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