

## Before the mediation

- + Ask yourself: What is my dispute about? This will help you be clear about what is in dispute with the other party. **Jot down some key points outlining what your dispute is about**, rather than try and remember it all.
- + Think about what you would like to happen. What outcome are you hoping for? It's a good idea to think about what you could do to achieve that outcome and resolve the dispute. **Write down what you would like to happen in the future and the reasons why.**
- + Think about the issues from the other party's perspective. What do you think the other party's point of view is? **It's helpful to jot down what you think some of the other party's concerns and interests are.** A key part of mediation is listening and understanding the other party's perspective, so you can find a way forward that works for you both.
- + Is there any documentation to support your goals that would be helpful during the mediation? **It's a good idea to make a list of documentation that you need to bring to the mediation.** Your mediator can help you with this during the intake session.
- + Carefully think about and prepare your opening statement. **Make a list of the topics and issues you would like to discuss during the mediation.** It's best you write your Opening Statement down (bullet points work well) so you can refer to these in the mediation. Your Opening Statement is an important part of the process, and it may be stressful to communicate it effectively without notes.

## During the mediation

- + **Bring an open mind.** It's important to understand that a successful mediation is determined by each party's willingness to **a/** listen to one another **b/** consider compromise and negotiation **c/** be solution focussed and **d/** be future focussed.
- + **Be respectful and listen to what everyone is saying.** Effective communication is key to a successful mediation. Your mediator will set some ground rules for and work to ensure there is respectful communication throughout the mediation.
- + **Stay positive.** Mediation offers parties in dispute a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to the court system, allowing parties some control over future arrangements in an informal environment. While the idea of going into mediation may trigger feelings of anxiety, stress, and sometimes, fear – try to stay positive throughout the process – **because life's too short to go to court.**