

Additional details of the mediation process

1. Intake sessions – To provide opportunity for all interested parties to speak, intake sessions should be scheduled in two-hour blocks and limited to 10 persons in each session. If some individuals have come together as proponents of a particular view or particular views, those individuals should attend an intake session as a group.

Any member of the congregation wishing to express his/her views about the situation should be encouraged to attend an intake session. Individuals who are unable to attend an intake session can contact one of the designated Help Team members to discuss the situation by telephone. The Help Team will meet separately with the pastor(s).

The preference is to schedule all intake sessions on the same day. Saturday usually is the day preferred by most individuals. If more than one day will be necessary to ensure everyone who wishes to be heard has an opportunity to meet with Help Team members, intake sessions also can be scheduled on either Friday evening or on Sunday of the same weekend.

2. Analysis of situation – An analysis of information gathered during intake sessions and during telephone conversations with individuals will be prepared by the Help Team within two weeks after obtaining the information, unless a different schedule is established. This analysis will be provided to the contact person(s) for distribution to everyone who participated in the intake sessions.

3. Mediation session – Before scheduling the mediation session, at least two weeks should be allowed for everyone to review the analysis provided by the Help Team and to contact Help Team members with any questions. The mediation session should be scheduled for a date on which persons representing the various viewpoints of the issues to be resolved can attend. Participants in the mediation session must include all individuals who will have to agree to the provisions of a memorandum of agreement. Based upon observations made, Help Team members also may suggest others be included in the mediation session.