



## Support Person Information

### What is a support person?

A support person is someone who attends and provides support to you at a mediation. Attending a mediation can be overwhelming. A support person can listen and help you understand or explain the issues in a dispute in private and be there as moral support. They are not an advocate for you nor do they talk on your behalf. Support people can provide valuable emotional and psychological support by just having them beside you.

A support person cannot be someone who has been involved in the dispute or someone who is affected by the dispute. Sometimes you may be able to have a support person in the intake session however if you would like to have a support person sit in on the mediation session itself, the other party and the mediators will also need to agree. If they are involved, they need to be accepted by everyone including the mediator as being a positive influence of the mediation process. They will also need to sign third party confidentiality agreement before the mediation.

### Best practice of choosing support people

It is important to note that any support people in a mediation need to be agreed to by the other party. This keeps the mediation transparent, and ensures all parties are 100% aware of who will be there.

Everyone in the joint session of mediation must feel comfortable and confident to be able to have open and honest discussions in the joint session of mediation. The mediator must also be sure that they are providing the best environment for everyone and the best opportunity to resolve all matters for moving forward.

If the other person objects to your support person being in the joint session you are welcome to call or see your support person in the breaks and private sessions only, always keeping in mind the importance of confidentiality.

