

FACILITATED CONVERSATIONS AND MEDIATION

“Helping People Talk
To People”

*Encourage and enable people in conflict
to discuss concerns and issues in a safe and productive environment, and
arrive at a cooperative and beneficial resolution.*

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*Solutions agreed on in
Facilitated Conversations are often more cost effective,
timely, comprehensive and lasting.*

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*Individuals affected by the solutions are those
making the decision, which promotes
trust & responsible communication in the future.*

Benefits include –

Effective. Provide positive and lasting solutions because people involved and affected by the conflict are those creating the solutions. They have buy-in and commitment to the solution they work to create.

Objective. Mediators don't take sides, advocate, represent or make decisions for any of the people at the table. Mediators are the independent, objective, neutral, third parties you call when you're caught in conflict.

Confidential. All those involved agree to confidentiality, which creates the *safe place* necessary for honesty and a lasting solution.

A Real Difference. We focus on problem solving, expectations, communication, and what it takes to truly resolve the conflict. As a result, attitudes and behavior are changed.

Positive Learning Experience. The parties learn effective skills for resolving conflicts which may arise in the future.

More Satisfying. Mediation continues to prove to be much more satisfying for both officers and community members than the traditional complaint resolution process, about eight times more satisfying!

How Facilitated Conversations Work for You –

- ◆ **The complaint is selected** based upon criteria the Police Department has agreed upon. The complaint is then referred to mediation.
- ◆ **We explain and answer questions** CMC contacts each person involved and explains the value of mediation & facilitated conversations. We listen to their concerns and answer any questions they may have.
- ◆ **Agreeing to Mediate**
Once the community member and officer agree to participate, mediation is scheduled at a time and place that is convenient. When the parties meet, a professional mediator helps them:
 - Set ground rules that ensure a respectful and safe environment,
 - Discuss each person's issues and concerns in a managed setting that is honest and respectful to everyone,
 - Identify important issues,
 - Constructively look for options and possible resolution, and
 - Make decisions based on what it will take to resolve the conflict.
- ◆ **Voluntary & Confidential**
Mediations and Facilitated Conversations are voluntary, confidential and generally last sixty to ninety minutes. All we need to get started is a good-faith commitment on the parties' part.

Reasons People Choose Facilitated Conversations –

- ◆ Mediation is an opportunity for officers and community members to hear, learn and understand the other person’s perspective.
- ◆ Mediation allows officers and community members to resolve complaints themselves, with the help of a mediator. This often provides valuable feedback on avoiding similar situations in the future and improves relationships between the police and community.
- ◆ Regain or improve confidence in the police department.
- ◆ Both the community member and officer exercise direct control over a quick and acceptable resolution.
- ◆ Resolve the issue outside the formal complaint process, often in a more rewarding and meaningful manner.
- ◆ The opportunity to discuss real issues. When we’re in conflict we generally focus on our solution to the problem as we understand the situation. Life doesn’t come in “one-size-fits-all,” and neither do lasting resolutions.
- ◆ Facilitated Conversations are confidential and provide the opportunity for honest and respectful communication.
- ◆ When both the citizen and officer agree to participate in mediation, their participation will result in the community member’s complaint being dismissed.

Common Misperceptions

- ◆ “I’ll be compelled to apologize or admit wrongdoing.”
 - No. Mediation is a voluntary process. No one is required to say or do anything they don’t choose.
- ◆ “It won’t do any good. The person is unreasonable and unpleasant.”
 - Generally not true. In an environment, facilitated by a professional mediator, the parties all behave in a much more constructive manner.
- ◆ “Mediation will just give them more time to complain and verbally attack.”
 - No. Professional mediators are trained and responsible for managing a safe process.
- ◆ “If I speak freely and honestly my words will be construed or used against me in a legal proceeding.”
 - No. The content of a mediation session is protected as confidential and not discoverable under a Colorado Statute. Each participant signs a legally binding confidentiality agreement prior to mediation.
- ◆ “What is my incentive to participate?”
 - Improved community relations between the police and citizens which leads to a safer community.
- ◆ “How can conflict be constructive?”
 - With a professional mediator in charge of the process, creative ideas are produced, lasting resolutions are made and people take personal responsibility for the outcome.