



PeaceWise

building peacemakers for life

What is co-mediation and

why is this PeaceWise's preferred method?

Co-mediation involves having two (or more) mediators work together as a team. Whilst we recognise that it is not always possible for co-mediation to occur, we would like to explain further why it is our preferred approach and the significant benefits it brings to the parties

Some of the advantages of co-mediation include:

For the Participants:

- a. The mediation team can represent the parties' diverse characteristics (e.g. male/female, church/school/other professional or ministry background, older/younger, etc.)
- b. A party has a better chance of feeling a sense of trust with at least one of the two mediators
- c. The preparation, prayer, insight into issues, Scriptural perspectives and godly wisdom of two is stronger than with one
- d. The parties have the advantage of the combined skills of two mediators, whose skills usually enhance and complement each other
- e. Co-mediators can model healthy and biblical ways of communicating and responding to issues
- f. There is a better "check" on mediators' possible biases or shortcomings

For the Mediators:

- a. Having a partner eases the load and tension of mediation, especially in difficult cases and multi-party situations
- b. Parties can be more inclined to focus on restoring relationship and addressing issues with a team rather than seeking to "win over" a sole mediator
- c. Co-mediation enables mediators to learn from each other, including less experienced mediators learning from more experienced mediators

What about the cost of mediation and co-mediation?

For every conflict, the parties need to assess the costs of following a Christian mediation process when weighed against their other alternatives and as they seek to assess their response to passages such as Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8 and John 17:20-23.

We believe that Christian mediation represents a God honouring alternative to secular mediation or litigation, and that there is great value in investing in a biblical process of restoration of relationships and addressing issues. Of particular relevance are the number of people who tend to be involved (directly or indirectly) in conflicts and the way they choose to respond. God calls his people to be known by their love and unity, so how Christians respond to conflict (either positive or negative) has wide ranging consequences, not just spiritual and relational but legal, financial and emotional as well.

Co-mediation is a greater investment towards addressing issues and restoring relationships than mediation with a sole mediator, yet this needs to be weighed against the benefits it provides.

In some cases, the situation is one of such complexity or seriousness that it is vital to have two mediators involved that have substantial experience. In other cases, this is not essential and so the costs of the second mediator are less.

As mediator rates are established by the mediators on an individual basis, this is a matter best discussed on a case by case basis. PeaceWise will also discuss directly with you its costs of being involved in your situation, which typically will be either an administration fee, a portion of the mediators' fees or a combination of both. In every case, you will know before the process begins what the proposed fee arrangements will be, so that everyone is clear on this important aspect.

Sometimes it is possible to find additional ways to support the financial costs of a mediation process, such as organisational or denominational support, a special donation from a concerned brother or sister or a review of the timing or prioritisation in using funds available for ministry.

We would encourage you to prayerfully consider these matters, and consider the opportunities to glorify God, serve others and grow to be like Christ that your particular situation represents.