

CITY OF KINGSTON

Office of Housing Initiatives

Bartek Starodaj, Director



Steven T. Noble, Mayor

City of Kingston Landlord-Tenant Mediation Program Fact Sheet

If you are experiencing a landlord/tenant conflict in the City of Kingston, **you can get free and confidential assistance from a trained, neutral mediator.** A mediator can help resolve your conflict without having to go to housing court. During a mediation session, you will sit down with the other party and a mediator will help you find common ground. Mediations can be virtual or in person. Mediation is a voluntary and free process.

To get started, contact the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) by submitting an [intake form](https://www.drcservices.org/request-for-mediation/) (<https://www.drcservices.org/request-for-mediation/>) or calling (845) 372-8771 x 5001. DRC will manage the intake process, provide the mediation session, and monitor case follow up. If an agreement is reached during the session(s), both parties will sign a written agreement outlining next steps. DRC can follow up to see how the agreement is working. The agreement is not a legally enforceable contract unless signed by a Judge.

Mediation does not replace housing court, but it can be a valuable first step to help both parties reach an agreement with the help of a trained mediator. If mediation does not work, tenants and landlords are free to proceed with the appropriate next steps, including taking their case to housing court.

Mediation can help resolve conflicts in areas such as:

- Disputes between landlords and tenants about rent, including agreements about payment plan for back rent owed
- Negotiations between landlords and tenants around potential rent increases
- Disputes around needed repairs, including maintenance and safety concerns
- Disputes between tenants/landlords involving commercial leases
- Disputes between tenants around noise or property use

Mediation may not be a good option if:

- You and your landlord don't feel safe speaking with each other

The DRC has been helping New Yorkers in Ulster County resolve conflicts for 15 years. Through their intake process, the DRC can help you determine if mediation is appropriate for your particular situation.

FAQs

- 1) Do I need to contact the other party before I reach out to the DRC requesting an intake?

If you are requesting mediation, you do not need to ask the other party prior to contacting DRC. DRC can contact the other party on your behalf.

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2) Do I need to have a good relationship with my landlord or tenant to proceed with mediation?

It can help to have an existing relationship with your landlord or tenant but it's not necessary. However, both parties must agree to the mediation session before it can proceed.

3) Does mediation replace housing court?

Mediation is a first step that landlords and tenants can take to resolve a dispute but it does not necessarily replace housing court. Both parties can proceed to court if they cannot reach a resolution.

4) What is the benefit of trying mediation services first?

The current housing crisis in Kingston sheds light on the need for new policies and program that provide conflict resolution mechanisms outside of the court system. This program allows tenants and landlords to bring up concerns in a non-adversarial open communication process, helping both sides understand where the other party is coming from as part of a proven, structured mediation process.

Mediation also prevents wasting judicial resources on matters that could be resolved outside of litigation. Mediation is also less time consuming than a court appearance.

5) Are there any income requirements?

There are no income requirements and this program is available to everyone. The process is free and confidential.

6) What is the typical timeline?

The typical turnaround from intake to mediation is two weeks.

7) Can my attorney be involved?

Yes, your attorney can be present for the mediation session.

Get Started

Fill out an [intake form](#) or call the DRC at (845) 372-8771 x 5001 to reach Jolynn Dunn.

If you have general questions about the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Program, contact the City of Kingston's Office of Housing Initiatives at (845) 334-3928.