

Client **Guidebook**



Online Mediation and Zoom: How it Works

For Parties, Counsel, and Decision-Makers

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PowerHouse Mediation provides experienced, professional mediation services in civil, family, and complex matters, guiding parties through a structured and confidential resolution process.

PowerHouse Mediation Client Guide

Welcome to Online Mediation with PowerHouse

Online mediation is a structured, confidential mediation process conducted using secure video conferencing technology, most often Zoom. This guide is intended to provide clarity about how online mediation works, what to expect, and how to prepare so your time is used productively.

Whether you are participating as a party, attorney, adjuster, or decision-maker, preparation and understanding matter. When participants know what to expect in a virtual setting, online mediation can be focused, efficient, and highly effective.

This guide is intended for parties, counsel, insurers, and decision-makers participating in mediation with PowerHouse.

1. What Online Mediation Is—and What It Is Not

Online mediation is a facilitated negotiation conducted by a neutral third party using video conferencing technology. The mediator does not decide the case or impose outcomes. Instead, the mediator manages the process, helps frame issues, and assists the parties in evaluating options for resolution.

Online mediation is not a trial, arbitration, or court hearing. It is not about determining fault or assigning blame. The focus is forward-looking and practical—assessing risk, cost, timing, and interests to determine whether resolution makes sense.

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Online Mediation at a Glance

Online mediation follows the same principles as in-person mediation, with the added flexibility of participating remotely. The process remains structured, confidential, and guided by an experienced neutral mediator.

2. How Zoom Is Used in Mediation

Zoom allows the mediator to conduct mediation in a secure, organized, and private virtual environment. The mediator controls the session and uses Zoom's breakout room feature to manage discussions.

Breakout rooms function like private conference rooms. The mediator can:

- Place participants into private rooms
- Move between rooms
- Hold confidential discussions
- Reassemble parties if helpful

Only the mediator can assign or enter breakout rooms.

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What Are Breakout Rooms?

Breakout rooms are private virtual spaces used for confidential discussions. Conversations in breakout rooms cannot be overheard by others and are controlled exclusively by the mediator.



3. Who Should Attend Online Mediation

Online mediation is most effective when the right people are present and prepared.

Typically, online mediation includes:

- The parties
- Legal counsel (if represented)
- A person with full settlement authority for each party

In insurance or business matters, this often includes an adjuster or executive with authority to approve resolution in real time. If a decision-maker cannot attend live, arrangements must be discussed in advance.

4. Preparing for Online Mediation

Preparation is critical. Online mediation is a strategic opportunity, not a casual video meeting.

Before mediation, participants should:

- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of their position
- Identify key interests and priorities
- Consider realistic settlement ranges
- Review all mediation materials and submissions
- Ensure technology is ready and tested

Technology Essentials

A reliable internet connection, a laptop or desktop computer, a working camera and microphone, and a quiet private location are essential for a productive online mediation.

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5. What to Expect on Mediation Day (Online)

Online mediation typically begins with the mediator meeting with all participants in a joint Zoom session to explain the process, confirm expectations, and address preliminary questions. This initial meeting is often brief and focused on structure rather than substance.

After the introduction, the mediator will generally separate the parties into private breakout rooms. From that point forward, mediation proceeds primarily through private meetings, often referred to as caucuses.

The mediator will move between rooms, facilitating discussion, conveying information, testing assumptions, and helping the parties evaluate options for resolution. Joint sessions may occur later in the day if productive, but they are not required.

Online mediation often involves periods of waiting, reflection, and reassessment. This is a normal and expected part of the process.

Mediation Works Best When:



Participants arrive prepared, informed, and empowered to make prepared decisions.



6. Confidentiality and the Online Mediation Process

Online mediation is confidential, subject to applicable law and the mediation agreement. Statements made during mediation are generally not admissible in court, and the mediator cannot be called to testify.

Participants are expected to join from a private location, avoid unauthorized listeners, and refrain from recording the session unless expressly authorized.

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Confidentiality Matters

Online mediation provides a secure environment for candid discussion. The mediator controls access to all rooms and ensures privacy throughout the process.

7. Decision-Making and Settlement Authority

Each party must have a representative with authority to make settlement decisions during online mediation. Delays caused by lack of authority undermine the process and reduce the likelihood of resolution.

Settlement authority should be real, informed, and flexible enough to respond to developments during mediation.

8. Common Questions and Misconceptions About Online Mediation

- Online mediation is voluntary. No party is required to reach an agreement.
- Participating remotely does not signal weakness or concession.
- Online mediation can be productive even when parties strongly disagree.
- Resolution may involve creative or non-monetary terms.

Online mediation is not a guarantee of settlement. Its value lies in providing a structured opportunity to assess risk, clarify positions, and explore resolution options in a confidential setting.

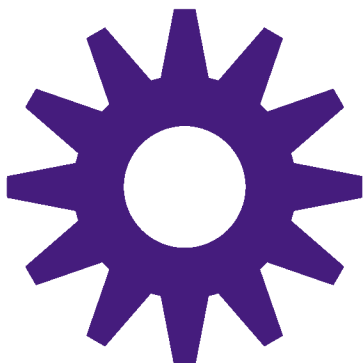
9. After Online Mediation: Next Steps

If a full or partial agreement is reached, the mediator will outline next steps for documenting and finalizing the resolution. Agreements may be signed electronically.

If the matter does not resolve, the mediator may discuss options for continued negotiation or future sessions.

10. Practical Tips for a Productive Online Mediation

- Come prepared and informed
- Treat the session professionally
- Stay engaged and responsive
- Communicate clearly and respectfully
- Use the mediator as a resource



Online mediation is most effective when participants engage in good faith.

Contact Information and Resources

PowerHouse Mediation provides professional mediation services in civil, family, and complex matters.

Our work is grounded in a structured, confidential process designed to support informed decision-making and meaningful resolution. If you have questions about mediation, the timing of the process, or whether mediation may be appropriate for your matter, we welcome the opportunity to discuss next steps.

For general inquiries:

info@powerhousemediation.com

For scheduling and case logistics:

scheduling@powerhousemediation.com

We appreciate your preparation and participation in the mediation process.



<https://powerhousemediation.com>

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