



COMMUNITY-POLICE MEDIATION PROGRAM

Apply to be a Mediator with the Fort Worth Community-Police Mediation Program!

The Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM) is excited to announce the Fort Worth Community-Police Mediation Program (CPMP) is accepting applications for new mediators. The program aims to improve relationships and build understanding between the community and the Fort Worth Police Department. The OPOM provides community members and police officers the unique opportunity to have a face-to-face conversation to address conflict in their interactions with each other, be heard and understood, hear each other's perspectives, and come to their own agreements about moving forward.

The CPMP is a program of the Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM), an independent, civilian police oversight agency whose mission is to improve police service to the community, citizen trust in the FWPD, and officer safety and working conditions.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The OPOM will be selecting 12 community members to join the program and serve as Community-Police Mediators. The OPOM is looking for applicants who are committed to social change, self-determination, community-building, public safety, conflict resolution, and using meaningful dialogue to make Fort Worth a safe, strong city. This is an opportunity to be part of democratizing policing in our city, improving accountability by giving space for civilians to directly address officer misconduct, and using a transformative justice approach to create change in our public safety and criminal justice system.

Applicants must be able to fulfill the following requirements and commitments:

- Live in Fort Worth
- Commit to serving at least two (2) years as a mediator, from January 2024 to January 2026
- Available and committed to mediating AT LEAST five (5) cases per year. Mediations take place Monday through Friday between 9am and 7pm and require 3 hours of time. We try to schedule mediations as quickly as possible once a case is referred, so mediators must have enough flexibility to do a mediation with about 4-7 days' notice. Please note, the majority of mediations occur between 10am-4pm during the weekdays, so it is essential that you can make yourself available during these hours.
- Attend the mandatory 50-hour training, which will take place over six (6) days, on Jan 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 30, 2024, 9am -5:30pm.
- Attend at least four (4) professional development sessions throughout the year, which take place from 6:00-9:00pm on weekday evenings

Other characteristics desired in applicants include:

- Empathic communication and listening skills
- The ability to hold space for intense emotions
- The capacity to demonstrate competence, composure and neutrality (open to hearing others' opinions and perspectives and an ability to put aside one's own biases)
- Commitment to improving community-police relationships in Fort Worth.
- Comfortable with constructive feedback and ability to learn a new process with patience and humility
- The OPOM seeks to recruit mediators with the greatest diversity and range possible of gender, age, race, ethnicity, language, education, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.

WHAT TO EXPECT AS A MEDIATOR

Initial 50-Hour Training

The comprehensive 50-hour training program is interactive and hands-on and includes a strong focus on role-playing and coaching to develop the mediators' skills. The twelve selected mediators will first attend the mandatory 50-hour training in January (see dates above), in which they will become trained in all aspects of the program, our model of mediation, and how to mediate a case from start to finish. Three FWPD officers will participate in the training as well to assist with role-plays, give mediators a sense of what it is like to mediate with officers, and serve as ambassadors to the program. The training is facilitated by one of the country's top mediation trainers. The OPOM offers the training at no charge to ensure that our mediators reflect the community's diversity with regard to age, race, income, education, gender, and ethnicity.

Mediating Cases

Once trained, the new mediators will be the first of the OPOM's Community-Police Mediation Program. Cases will be referred on a rolling basis throughout the year. Once a case is eligible for mediation, the program director emails the pool of mediators with the time, date, and location and asks who is available. The request for mediators typically is sent about 4-7 days in advance of the mediation date. Mediators reply as soon as possible with their availability and are selected based on availability and matching demographics of the participants. We use a co-mediation model, so two mediators are assigned per case. New mediators are paired with more experienced mediators for the first few mediations. Mediations typically occur Monday through Friday between 9am and 7pm, with an occasional Saturday mediation. Mediators should expect a case to take approximately 3 hours (1 hour of prep and debrief and 2 hours for the mediation). Mediations take place at libraries, recreation centers, and non-profit meeting rooms across the city. After each mediation, mediators return surveys and a brief report to the program director and the case is then closed.

Professional Development

In-service mediation trainings are provided bi-monthly, in which mediators develop and practice their skills through role-playing, skill-building activities, debriefing challenges and discussing successes from their cases. The Program Director provides feedback and support to mediators on an ongoing basis.

PLEASE NOTE: The OPOM provides extensive mediation training that is free of charge. In return, active participation in the program - which means being available to mediate at least 5 cases per year and attending 4 in-service trainings, as listed in the selection criteria above - is required. Before applying, please carefully read the “What to Expect as a Mediator” section and determine whether your schedule and other commitments will allow you to be an active participant in the program given the timing, locations, and turn-around time for scheduling mediations. We have only 12 spots in the program, so we ask for your honesty about your commitment and availability to be an OPOM mediator. Mediators who do not fulfill their commitment can be required to pay back the value of the training on a prorated basis.

APPLICATION PROCESS & DEADLINES

Below is a timeline of our 2023 selection process. If interested, please complete the attached application and return it as soon as possible. Please also share this information widely with any others who you think may be interested and available to serve.

Timeline of Mediator Selection Process and Training

November 1, 2023: Initial call for applications sent out

December 31, 2023: Applications due

January 2-5, 2023: Interviews of selected applicants

January 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 30, 2024, - 9am -5:30pm.: Mandatory New Mediators Training

CONTACT

For any questions, please contact Mediation Program Coordinator, Taylor Davis at 817.392.6518 or taylor.davis@fortworthtexas.gov.

COMMUNITY-POLICE MEDIATION PROGRAM

Application for Community-Police Mediator

Thank you for your interest in becoming a community-police mediator. The following application can be completed online through our website. Or, please type or print clearly and submit via email to Taylor.Davis@fortworthtexas.gov, or mail to Office of the Police Oversight Monitor, 200 Texas St, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.

Name: _____ Today's date: _____

Cell phone: _____ Home phone: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Current occupation and place(s) of employment:

How many hours per week do you work (if multiple jobs, list how many hours at each). How flexible is your schedule?

Prior mediation training or conflict resolution experience (if any):

Questions:

1. How did you learn about the Community-Police Mediation Program?

2. Why do you want to become a community-police mediator?

3. What skills do you have that would make you a good mediator?

4. What experience do you have with conflict resolution (in your family life, relationships, organizations, associations, or as a professional mediator)?

5. Have you ever participated in a mediation or restorative justice session of any kind before as a participant or a mediator? If so, how do you think this kind of mediation may differ?

6. What experiences have you had in the community that you think might prepare you to serve as a mediator in this program?

7. What experiences have you had with police that you think might prepare you to serve as a mediator in this program?

8. What do you think about the current state of community and police relations in Fort Worth?

9. What other commitments and responsibilities do you currently have (work, family, volunteer activities, or involvement in other organizations)? How many hours per week is your commitment to them? In what ways might they limit your availability to mediate cases.

10. Mediations take place in various neighborhoods around the city of Fort Worth. Do you have a reliable mode of transportation to get to mediation sessions?

Yes No

11. Which days and times would you be available next week if a 3-hour mediation were scheduled? (check all that you are available for):

M 9a-12p Tu 9a-12p W 9a-12p Th 9a-12p F 9a-12p Sat 9a-12p
 M 1p-4p Tu 1p-4p W 1p-4p Th 1p-4p F 1p-4p Sat 1p-4p
 M 5p-8p Tu 5p-8p W 5p-8p Th 5p-8p F 5p-8p Sat 5p-8p

12. In selecting and assigning mediators to mediations, we take into account participant and mediator demographics as evidenced as a best practice in community mediation. The OPOM seeks to recruit trainees with the greatest diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, language, education, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background. The following information is optional but you are invited to share if you are willing to help us meet our diversity needs.

Gender _____ Age _____ Race _____ Ethnicity/ies _____

Birthplace _____ Other identities you'd like to share: _____

Highest Level of Education _____

Past/Current Types of Employment _____

13. Please list any languages other than English that you speak fluently:

References

Please give us the name, relationship, email address, and phone number for two people who are familiar with your skills (relational skills, listening skills, conflict resolution skills, mediator skills).

1.

2.

TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT

If selected as a Community-Police Mediator (please initial on each line):

___ I am available to attend the 50-hours of initial training, which will take place over six (6) days, on January 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 30, 2024, - 9am -5:30pm.. provided to me at no cost.

___ I understand that if I become unable to complete the required 50 hours of initial training, I will notify the Mediation Program Coordinator before January 6, 2024 or as soon as possible to withdraw my application from consideration since space is strictly limited to 12 individuals. I would not have the opportunity to continue in the program for 2024 but could apply again in a future training in the coming years.

___ I will commit to a minimum of five (5) mediations per year, which requires that I have the flexibility and commitment to mediate cases that take 3 hours and typically take place Monday through Friday, 9:00am-7:00pm, and are scheduled with 4-7 days' notice.

___ I will commit to a minimum of two (2) years to the Community-Police Mediation Program of the Office of the Police Oversight (OPOM), from Jan 2024 to Jan 2026.

___ I am available to attend a minimum of four three-hour in-service trainings a year. (usually offered on weekday evenings).

___ I understand that if I am unable to fulfill the above commitments, I can be required to pay back the value of the mediation training on a prorated basis.

Signed

Print Name

Date