

Factsheet on Community Mediation Centre (CMC)

What is Mediation?

1. Mediation is a private and confidential process where a neutral person, i.e. the mediator, facilitates discussions between parties who are in a dispute, in an effort to reach a mutually acceptable solution. It is also conducted on a voluntary basis.

A Brief History of the CMC

2. The CMC was set up to provide an accessible, affordable and effective means of resolving social and community conflicts for residents in Singapore. Together with its volunteers and partnering government agencies, the CMC contributes towards the development of a harmonious, civil and gracious community living. The first CMC was opened in Marine Parade in 1998, with 47 volunteer mediators appointed on to its panel. A majority of the mediators were grassroots leaders. Three other centres were opened in Ang Mo Kio (1999), Woodlands Civic Centre (2001), and the then-Subordinate Courts (2004) respectively.
3. In 2012 and 2014, the centres were centralised for greater efficiency and economies of scale. CMC is now located at the URA Centre (East Wing).
4. Today, in its 20th year of operation, the CMC Panel of Community Mediators has a total of 153 mediators.
5. Our mediators are trained and committed volunteers who are motivated to give back to society. The key to CMC's success lies in the support of these volunteers.

CMC Milestones (20 years in a snapshot)

Year	Milestone
1996	An Inter-Agency Committee was established to explore the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in Singapore
1997	The Committee submitted their recommendations to MinLaw which was accepted
1998	Enactment of the Community Mediation Centre Act The 1st CMC (Regional East) opened at Marine Parade
1999	The 2nd CMC (Central) opened at Ang Mo Kio
2000	Launch of the CMC website
2001	The 3rd CMC (Regional North) opened at the Woodlands Civic Centre
2002	The CMC participated in the 1st National Mediation Conference
2003	The CMC (Central) moved from Ang Mo Kio to the URA Centre (East Wing)
2004	The CMC opened in the Subordinate Courts
2005	The CMC participated in the 1 st National ADR Forum

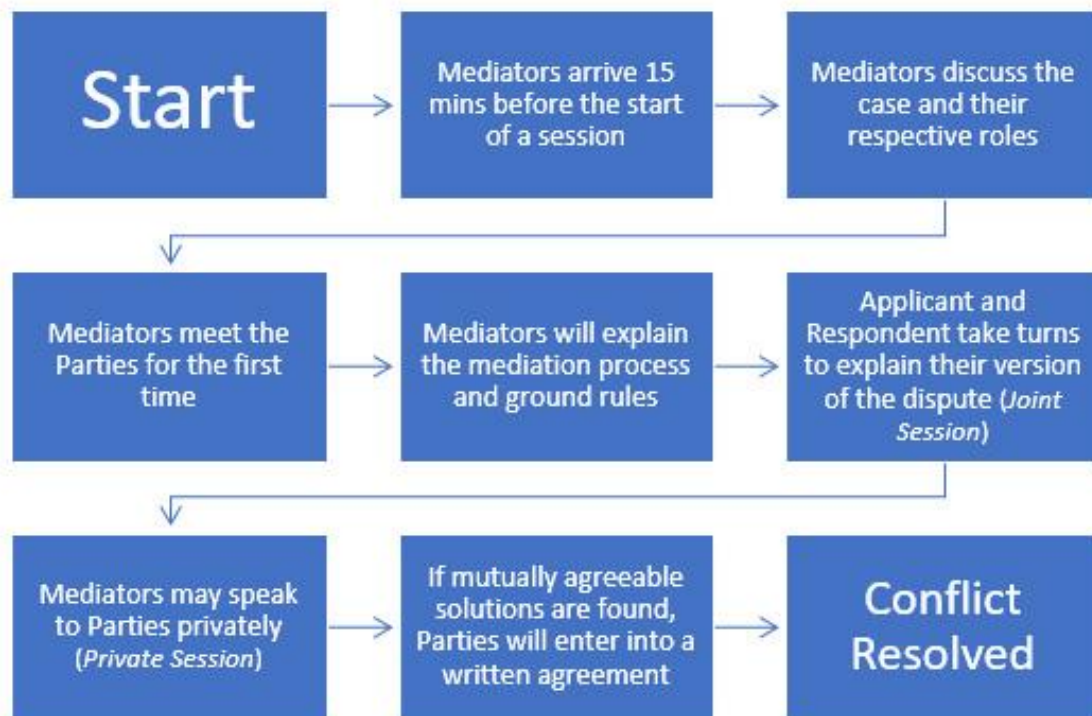
2006	The CMC participated in its 1st YOUTH Forum
2007	Consolidation of the CMC (Regional East) with the CMC (Central) at the URA Centre (East Wing)
2008	The CMC celebrated its 10th Anniversary
2011	Set up of the Advisory Committee on Community Mediation (ACCM)*
2012	Consolidation of the CMC (Regional North) and CMC (Central) operations at The Treasury Building Implementation of the new Mediator Management Framework
2014	Consolidation of the CMC (State Courts) and CMC (Central) operations at the URA Centre (East Wing) Launch of the Mediators Portal - The CMC leverages on digital technologies to manage its pool of mediators for more efficient deployment of resources.
2015	Launch of the Commemorative Book entitled '50 Community Mediation Stories', published as part of SG50 celebrations Unveiling of a new CMC logo for a fresh take on CMC's mission to provide an attractive, practical and convenient solution for social and community disputes in Singapore
2015	As part of the Community Disputes Resolution Framework, CMC started providing training in basic mediation skills to grassroots leaders.
2017	CMC extended its basic mediation training to the frontline officers from government agencies and other organisations that deal with municipal issues. This practice is still ongoing and has been helpful for the officers in their dealings with the public.

* The committee chaired by Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee was set up in 2011 for the purpose of advising CMU on initiatives to (i) attract and ensure a sustainable supply of volunteers to support CMU's efforts; (ii) heighten the awareness of CMC's services through public outreach efforts; (iii) promote community mediation in the public sphere and (iv) strengthen CMU's partnership networks to ensure effective channelling of cases to CMC for mediation.

Mediation at the CMC

- Each mediation session is facilitated by two mediators. The mediation session takes place in a mediation room that is tailored to meet the needs of the parties and mediators. The room is sound-proof, so parties have the assurance of privacy.

So what happens during a CMC mediation session?



Developments in mediation

7. The Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals (CDRTs) were set up in 2015 as part of the State Courts to provide a more affordable and streamlined service to resolve intractable disputes between neighbours. The CDRTs are an avenue of last resort, after other efforts to resolve the disputes, including community mediation, have been exhausted. Some of the orders that the CDRTs can make include ordering a party to pay damages, to apologise to the other party, or to attend mandatory mediation. The CDRTs are part of the enhanced Community Dispute Resolution Framework (CDRF).
8. The CDRF consists of three key aspects:
 - i. Cultivating good neighbourliness to prevent disputes from arising
 - ii. Using mediation as the primary means of resolving disputes: these include informal mediation by neutral third-parties such as grassroots leaders or formal mediation conducted at the CMC
 - iii. When mediation fails, the case can be brought to the CDRTs to be resolved.

Number of cases mediated

9. From 1998-2017, more than 9,000 cases were mediated with more than 70% of such cases successfully settled.
10. In 2016 and 2017, 510 and 429 cases were mediated respectively. For the first 6 months of this year, 211 cases were mediated, with 77% of the cases successfully settled.

Categories of relational disputes

11. There are five broad categories of relational disputes that CMC handles (information is on CMC website):
 - Neighbours;
 - Family members;
 - Friends;
 - Co-workers; as well as
 - Landlords and tenants or co-tenants.
12. About 60% of the disputes that were mediated at the CMC involved neighbours. The remaining 40% were disputes due to family (8%), friends (7%), colleagues (8%), strangers and others (18%).

Top three causes of neighbour disputes (number of cases mediated by CMC) (2016-2018)		
2016	2017	Jan-June 2018
Noise (136)	Noise (113)	Noise (65)
Abusive words and unacceptable conduct (41)	Abusive words and unacceptable conduct (30)	Abusive words and unacceptable conduct (19)
Harassment (30)	Harassment (21)	Harassment (10)