

ONLINE MEDIATION

GUIDELINES AND GROUND RULES

Technology:

1. Zoom Online Platform. You understand that the Ombuds Office uses the online secure platform provided by Zoom to conduct online mediation sessions. You agree that well in advance of your first scheduled mediation session, you will download Zoom and install the software and/or apps necessary to participate in the Zoom online mediation sessions. As members of the University of Colorado Boulder community you have access to the University Zoom license. If you require assistance, please visit the [OIT website](#). Once you have downloaded Zoom **you agree to familiarize yourself with the operation of the Zoom platform so that you are able to operate the system and participate in your mediation sessions**. Tutorials are available at <https://support.zoom.us>. Make sure your audio and video are working correctly. Practice!
2. Scheduling Zoom Mediation. At the time the mediation is scheduled parties will receive a meeting ID and password. Participants are strictly prohibited from sharing the meeting ID and password with any other person.
3. Secure WiFi or Ethernet Connection. You will need a strong and secure WiFi or Ethernet (hard-wired) connection for your computer. You may NOT use a public access WiFi connection, such as those available in public spaces and businesses as they are not secure and your information may be at risk in that situation. In addition, a strong internet connection is vital to the proper function of the online videoconferencing. A poor connection will result in a frozen screen and/or audio issues that will significantly disrupt the process. We suggest you turn the WiFi off on all other devices that might interfere with your connection.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

4. Absolute Prohibition on Recording. You, or anyone on your behalf, may NOT audio or video record any mediation session or portion thereof. In the event that you learn of an audio or video recording of any session, you will take immediate



- measures to destroy the recording and will not disseminate the recording to any third parties. You further agree that you will not transmit a live or deferred video
5. or audio relay of the online mediation sessions to third parties.
 - a. Before the mediation begins, the ombuds will ask you to confirm that you are alone in the room and that you cannot be overheard.
 - b. All communication, by and between participants in the course of mediation or a mediation consultation (in an online platform or otherwise), shall remain confidential.
 - c. The participants agree not to call the ombuds to testify in a court of law.

Best Practices and Troubleshooting

6. Interruption Free Zone. You agree to take all reasonable measures to ensure that you are not interrupted during your online mediation sessions. This includes arranging for appropriate childcare, notifying family and friends of your unavailability and making appropriate scheduling choices.
7. Technology Hiatus. Except for the computer or mobile device upon which you are conducting your online mediation session, you agree to turn off or put on silent any phones, tablets or computers and disable any alert announcements and/or texts for the duration of your online mediation sessions. Further, you agree to refrain from the use of social media, email and/or internet search engines, other than as may be necessary to conduct the session, during your online mediation sessions.
8. Early Log On. You agree that whenever possible, you will log on to the scheduled mediation session no less than 5 minutes in advance of the scheduled start time so that any technology issues can be resolved, and your mediation session can start on time.
9. Waiting Room. In order to preserve the neutrality of your ombuds under all circumstances, you will enter the meeting each time you log on in a “virtual waiting room” until all parties have arrived. This also adds a layer of security and privacy. Once all parties are logged on and in the waiting room, the ombuds will admit all participants to the meeting and lock the meeting. If all parties are not signed in to the waiting room 5 minutes after the scheduled start time for your mediation session, the ombuds will admit all parties who have signed in so that a determination can be made as to how to proceed.



Ombuds Office

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

10. Technology Failure Protocol. You understand that despite all best efforts, at times, technology may not operate properly and a scheduled online mediation session may not commence on time or may be interrupted. If your connection to the meeting is interrupted, please attempt to log on again. If you are unable to join a scheduled mediation session, please immediately call the Ombuds Office at 303-492-5077 to discuss how to proceed. In the event that the technology issues cannot be resolved in reasonable time, the online mediation session will be canceled and rescheduled as soon as possible.
11. Caucus Failure Protocol. At times, it may be beneficial for the ombuds to caucus with participants separately. The Zoom online platform allows the ombuds to “mute” one participant to the online mediation session while continuing to communicate with the other participant for a caucus. The ombuds may also use breakout rooms to separate participants. You agree that in the event that you are the muted party, or separated during a caucus between the ombuds and the other party, and are able to hear the communication intended to be private, you will IMMEDIATELY terminate the Zoom online mediation session and will call the Ombuds Office at 303-492-5077.
12. Respectful Online Communication. Due to the nature of the online forum, it is especially important to allow each participant to finish their comment or statement before responding. In addition, the online format can amplify and exaggerate sound so maintaining a regular speaking voice is important. Finally, please remember that the camera does not always transmit gestures or non-verbal cues, so it is important to verbalize all communication during an online mediation session.
13. Ombuds Office Physical Location. The University of Colorado Boulder’s Ombuds Office is located in the Center for Community Suite S484. Ombuds are individually located in Denver and Boulder.