

Mediation (Additional Information begins pg 18 Maryland Parental Safeguards)

Mediation is facilitated negotiation. A neutral party, a mediator, helps parents and school districts resolve their disputes in an informal meeting. Mediation is voluntary. The parent(s), school district or the mediator may end the mediation at any time. The mediator does not make a decision for the parties, like a judge or a due process hearing officer. The mediator helps the parties do the following: identify issues, discuss viewpoints, generate options, and create solutions agreeable to all. When the parties resolve all or some of the issues, they work together to write an agreement. They both sign the agreement. Parties may ask an attorney to review the agreement before signing. If the parties are not comfortable with the agreement, they should not sign it. The signed agreement is a contract and is legally binding.

Mediation does not delay or deny the right to a due process hearing. Mediation encourages mutual respect, promotes communication and contributes to a more positive working relationship in the future. A request for mediation is made to the public agency responsible for the early intervention or education of the child and the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). To assist parents with filing request for mediation form is available from the public agency and on the MSDE website at www.marylandpublicschools.org. For further assistance, contact the public agency's Special Education Office or the MSDE, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, 410-767-7770.

Family Support Services

You may wish to contact the special education office for your local school system to find out about Family Support Services, Partners for Success, or similar services that may be available to provide assistance.

**FREE OR LOW COST ASSISTANCE FOR
SPECIAL EDUCATION DISPUTES**

Following is a list of attorneys and advocacy organizations that may provide legal and other services to individuals in special education disputes.

229 Hanover Street P.O. Box 907 Annapolis, MD 21404 410-263-8330 800-666-8330	106 N. Washington Street Suite 101 Easton, MD 21601 410-763-9676 800-477-2543	111 High Street P.O. Box 4116 Salisbury, MD 21801 410-546-5511 800-444-4099	103 S. Hickory Avenue Bel Air, MD 21014 410-879-3755 410-836-8202 800-444-9529
500 East Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21202 410-951-7777 800-999-8904	22 South Market Street Suite 11 Frederick, MD 21701 301-694-7414 800-679-8813	29 West Susquehanna Ave. Suite 305 Towson, MD 21204 410-296-6705 www.mdlab.org	P.O. Box 249 Route 231 Hughesville, MD 20637 301-932-6661 410-535-3278 877-310-1810
6811 Kenilworth Avenue Calvert Building, Suite 500 Riverdale, MD 20737 301-927-6800 888-215-5316	110 Greene Street Cumberland, MD 21502 301-777-7474 866-389-5243		

Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)

1500 Union Avenue Suite 2000 Baltimore, MD 21211 410-727-6352 410-727-6387 TDD 800-233-7201 www.mdlcbalto.org
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Kennedy Krieger Institue

Maureen van Stone, Esq., M.S. Director, Project HEAL 716 N. Broadway, Office 106 Baltimore, MD 21205 (443) 923-4416 (443) 923-4414 (Intake line) vanstone@kennedykrieger.org
Mallory Finn, Esq. Staff Attorney, Project HEAL 716 N. Broadway, Office 111 Baltimore, MD 21205 (443) 923-9571 (443) 923-4414 (Intake line) finnm@kennedykrieger.org

Parent's Place of Maryland

(Provide Parent Support and Training)

801 Cromwell Park Drive Suite 103 Glen Burnie, MD 21061 410-768-9100 www.ppmmd.org

University of Maryland Clinical Law Office

500 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, MD 21201 410-706-3295 http://www.law.umaryland.edu
