



CENTRAL TEXAS  
**DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION  
CENTER**

IRVING HAYS, GUADALUPE, COMAL, AND CALDWELL COUNTIES

# RESOLVE 2020

Central Texas Dispute Resolution Center Newsletter

September 2020

## Hello Fall 2020!

*“Great ability develops and reveals itself increasingly with every new assignment.”*

- Baltasar Gracian

### **Friends of the DRC;**

We are pleased the DRC has continued its mission of serving the public throughout this trying time. The past few months have been demanding on our communities, but we are a spirited people who endure amid adversity. Our devoted staff has been remarkable! The DRC's daily operations and the coordination of mediations have not faltered. Our pool of mediators remains prepared and ready to serve when called. As we strive to make it on the other side of these challenging days, we ask for your continued support and patience. Thank you for your friendship.

Respectfully,

Brenda Jarden-Holter

Board President

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## Quarterly Question

### **How is CTDRC addressing COVID-19?**

Our current guidelines for COVID-19 are available on our web site at [centexdrc.org](http://centexdrc.org). Go to the top right hand corner and click on the COVID-19 Tab. Our offices are closed until further notice to the general public.

COVID-19

ZOOM

Online Mediation

## Remote Mediations: Using ZOOM

During this uncertain time, ZOOM has been a staple for conducting online mediations when we aren't able to participate in-person. ZOOM has helped participants feel comfortable in the safety of their home, while still offering a structured environment to be able to confidentially conduct mediation. That being said, there are a lot of guidelines that go along with using ZOOM for mediation. Below are a few helpful tips to guide you with your journey in exploring the mediation platform beast that is—ZOOM!

- You'll need a decent computer (the bigger the screen monitor, the better) with fast processor and the best internet speed (wired connection helps) in your area. If you don't have these capabilities, you are welcome to come to the DRC to help conduct these ZOOM mediations.
- Get a webcam with at least 1040p and a microphone built in, so that the participants can see and hear you clearly.
- Purchase the Pro version of ZOOM. This gives you unlimited time for mediations, and access to a lot of the functionality and capabilities that ZOOM has to offer, like the Breakout Rooms.
- Setting up ZOOM mediations can be tricky. Familiarize yourself with setting up ZOOM mediations on both the Web Browser, and Application. Each avenue has different invitations and capabilities such as; required registration.
- Learn how to use the breakout rooms. This is essential for confidential mediations where parties do not feel comfortable speaking with each other, or if the mediators need to debrief with each other. Broadcasting a message to all parties before entering a room is a common courtesy. If you want to learn more about Breakout Rooms, reach out to us and request a quick training.
- Make sure you are remaining neutral, as to how you admit participants from the waiting room and introducing them to the ZOOM mediation. Find a process that is comfortable for you!
- Check to make sure all of your settings are set to where the mediation is as confidential and private as possible. This includes not allowing parties to leave breakout rooms, record the mediation, or save the chat log.
- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE. The best way to get comfortable with ZOOM is just by clicking around and figuring out which each of the functions like: Muting Participants, Renaming the Rooms, Annotate, Share Screen and Whiteboard, can do for you! Let's set up a practice time whenever you're ready.



## Mediation During COVID-19

We are experiencing challenging times. Since March, everyone has been affected by COVID-19. Some folks more than others. Some have lost family members, while others have lost friends and neighbors. Some have experienced a loved one in critical condition that today has recovered. There are others who have had this disease and don't realize it because they had no symptoms. At the DRC we want to take this opportunity to say thanks to our volunteer mediators for stepping up and helping us out. Because of you, we have been able to keep up with the mediations and not missed a step. Some of you stepped up in the early days of COVID-19 and volunteered to do face-to-face mediations to meet specific needs. We did follow the rules and wore masks and practiced social distancing. Others have volunteered to learn and use ZOOM. Some that knew how ZOOM worked have offered us words of wisdom to make it better. The team spirit during these challenging times has been incredible. Our volunteers are the best!



Luis Prieto, Jr. and Roy Scudday, one of the first mediator teams to do a face-to-face mediation.

## TMCA Credentials:

### **CHANGES TO 2021 TMCA CREDENTIAL RENEWAL & APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FEES DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

#### **For TMCA renewals for the year 2021 only:**

- ✦ **Renewal fees will be reduced by 50%** for all Credential designations, including the fee for volunteer mediators, for all renewals submitted and paid by 12/31/20.
- ✦ The **annual mediation experience requirement** has been waived for all Credential designations.
- ✦ The **continuing education requirement has been reduced** from 15 hours to 10 hours. Such 10 hours must have occurred this year (2020) and relate to the practice of mediation. Of such hours, at least three (3) must consist of mediation ethics, up to four (4) may be self-study, and up to five (5) may be as an instructor of mediation training. Given the reduction in CED hours, such 10 hours shall not include substantive courses. For information regarding Continuing Education Criteria, click [here](#).
- ✦ The **requirement to make him/herself available to conduct pro bono mediations each year has been waived** for TMCA Credentialed Advanced Mediators and TMCA Credentialed Distinguished Mediators.
- ✦ For **Candidates for Credentialed Mediator whose fourth year as such occurred in 2020**, that candidate may continue as a Candidate for Credentialed Mediator for one additional year.

# 2020 Texas Mediator Credentialing Association 16th Annual Symposium:

**Saturday, October 24, 2020 from 8:30 to 5:00 P.M.**

This year's TMCA Symposium is all about us as mediators truly embracing where we are in these uncertain times and learning to make the best of it for those we serve...and for ourselves. During the morning sessions, the focus will be on recent mediation case law from the Supreme Court of Texas on down. Then, we will focus on becoming more culturally responsive as mediators, given the systems of inequity in our country. The afternoon sessions will be both informative and entertaining, as some of our more experienced "Zoomers" (fellow mediators) will go beyond the basics of "Zoomediations," sharing their best tips, best practices, and some of their best, and worst, experiences online. Appropriately, our Symposium will end with ways to deal with the effects of staring at our computer screens all day most days. (For additional information please see the TMCA Website)

We are having a small gathering at the CTDRC for those that want to attend and/or those that do not have good internet service. We are limiting the number to 10 people total for the entire building. If you are interested in attending at the DRC you will need to register for the Symposium and send us a copy of your receipt no later than October 23, 2020 at 4:00 P.M. Admission will be first come first served.

## Resources:

- Texas Assoc. of Mediators (TAM): <https://www.txmediator.org/>
- State Bar of Texas / Alternative Dispute Resolution Section: <https://texasadr.org/>
- Texas Mediation Credentialing Assoc. (TMCA): <http://txmca.org/>

## Contact Us

Give us a call at (512) 878 - 0382 or email us at [office@centexdrc.org](mailto:office@centexdrc.org) for more information about our services.

Visit us on the web at [www.centexdrc.org](http://www.centexdrc.org)

**Central Texas DRC**



