



Basic Training in Divorce Mediation – Program

DAY 1
FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2026

- 9:00 - 10:30 Introduction of Instructors
Active listening skills in dyads – the importance of open and closed questions.
- 10:30 - 11:15 Role Play #1 with Harry & Wendy – 1st Session
An Ambivalent Couple
(Demonstration by Trainers)
- 11:15 15-minute break
- 11:30 - 12:30 Introduction of Participants. Burning Question & Answers
- 12:30 - 1:00 Basic Concepts of Mediation
- 1:00 - 2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 - 3:00 Mediation Techniques I (A170-179)
 - Active Listening
 - Risks to the integrity of the mediation process when mediators make proposals, evaluate solutions, or draft agreements for parties.
- 3:00 - 4:00 Role Play #1 with Harry & Wendy – 1st Session
An Ambivalent Couple
(Small Groups)
- 4:00 15-minute break
- 4:15 - 5:00 Role and Function of the Mediator, with Emphasis on the Initial Session – Panel Discussion
 - Values and purposes.
 - Role of consulting attorney, and pros and cons of mediation vs litigation.
 - Considerations: voluntary, party self-determination, safety, confidentiality and exceptions, impartiality, informed decision making.
- 5:00 - 5:45 Mediation Techniques II (A170-179)
- 5:45 - 6:00 Summary of Day 1 content
 - Students share what they have learned/
 - What they found challenging
 - Q&A

DAY 2
SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026

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| 9:00 - 10:15 | Equitable Distribution (C84-93) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marital vs. Separate Property ● Equal vs. Equitable -or-
For Experienced Attorneys: : Mediation Pitfalls I |
| 10:15 - 10:45 | Retirement Plans - Part I (C94-101) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pensions, IRA's, Social Security |
| 10:45 | 15-minute break |
| 11:00 - 12:00 | Parenting Schedules (see Parenting Schedules folder on Google Drive) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly ● Holidays and Vacations ● Summer ● Special Days |
| 12:00 - 12:45 | Role Play #2 with Harry & Wendy – 3 rd Session (E7-11)
(Small Groups) |
| 12:45 - 1:45 | Lunch |
| 1:45 - 2:45 | Mediator Bias – Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define bias ● Trainers and students share personal biases ● Particular attention paid to parenting issues ● Skills for developing awareness of and responding to bias |
| 2:45 - 3:40 | Decision Making: Joint vs. Sole Custody <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advantages and disadvantages ● Types of decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical, child care, educational, children with special needs, religious issues, developmental decisions ● Mediation vs litigation of such issues |
| ● 3:40 | 15-minute break |
| 3:55 - 5:55 | Domestic Violence - Concepts and Screening (F1-89) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Power & control ● Why she doesn't leave" ● Is mediation appropriate? |
| 5:55 - 6:00 | Summary and closing |

DAY 3
SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026

9:00 - 10:00 Spousal Maintenance:

- Two formulas & shortcut
- Calculating income, applying income cap
- Duration, deviation, retirement

-or-

For Experienced Attorneys: : Mediation Pitfalls II

10:00 - 10:30 Child Support Expense Sharing (C29-35), (C66-68)

- A/B expenses
- Adjustments
- When to budget

10:30 10-minute break

10:40 - 11:40 Child Support (C69-83)

- Understanding and using the New York Guidelines (C21-28)
- Child support:
- Determining adjusted parental income
- Percentage per child
- Add-on expenses
- Adjustments and duration

-or-

For Experienced Attorneys: : Mediation Pitfalls III

11:40 - 12:00 Custody Law

- Historical context
- Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act.

12:00 - 1:00 Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 Role Play #3 with Harry & Wendy – 5th Mediation Session: (E12-16)
Equitable Distribution, Marital Residence (Demonstration by Trainers)

2:00 - 3:00 Role Play #3 with Harry & Wendy – 5th Mediation Session: (E12-16)
Equitable Distribution, Marital Residence (Small Groups)

3:00 15-minute Break

3:15 - 3:45 Developmental Issues (A17-19)

- Wallerstein's stages
- Telling children
- Introducing Romantic Partners

3:45 - 4:45 Retirement Plans -- Part II (C112-126)

4:45 15-minute Break

5:00 - 5:50 Mediation Techniques III (A170-179)

5:50 - 6:00 Summary and closing - Homework Reminder (D2-3)

DAY 4
SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 2026

- 9:00 - 10:30 Taxes and Divorce (C112-126, C38, C134, G1-32)
- Exemptions and Credits
 - Capital Gains
 - Tax Implications of Various Strategies
- 10:30-10:35 5-minute break
- 10:35 - 11:20 How to give Children Information:
- What to Tell the Children (A285-320, B70)
 - Introduction of Romantic Partners (B71)
- 11:20 - 12:05 Breaking Impasse in High Conflict Couples
- 12:05 10-minute break
- 12:15 - 1:00 Retirement Plans -- Part II (C112-126)
- 1:00 - 2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 - 2:30 Grounds & Fault (C127-133)
- 2:30 - 3:15 Role Play #4 with Harry & Wendy – 7th Session (E17-21)
Equitable Distribution, Retirement Assets
(Demonstration by Trainers)
- 3:15 5-minute break
- 3:30 - 4:05 Role Play #4 with Harry & Wendy – 7th Session (E17-21)
Equitable Distribution, Retirement Assets
(Small Groups)
- 4:05 10-minute break
- 4:15 - 5:15 Memorandums of Understanding & Separation Agreements: (B37-60)
- Working with lawyers and drafting memos
- 5:15 - 5:50 Divorce Mediation Process - Panel Discussion
- 5:50- 6:00 Summary and closing

DAY 5
SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2026

- 9:00 - 9:45 Ethical Issues & Contact with Others
- Attorneys
 - Psychotherapists
 - Other Professionals
 - Family Members
 - NYS Council Guidelines
 - Mediation Organizations
- 9:45 - 10:15 The Marital Residence: Central Role of “The House” in Mediation
- 10:15 10-minute break
- 10:25 - 11:10 How To Read a Tax Return
- 11:10 - 11:40 Role Play #5 - 9th Session – Child Support (E22-25)
(Demonstration by trainers)
- 11:40 5-minute break
- 11:45 - 12:15 Role Play #5 - 9th Session – Child Support (E22-25)
(Small Groups)
- 12:15 - 1:15 Lunch
- 1:15 - 2:15 Child Support & Spousal Maintenance Homework review
question and answer time. (D2-3)
-or-
For Experienced Attorneys: special issues related to mediation practice
- 2:15 5-minute break
- 2:20 - 3:20 Role Play #6 with Harry & Wendy – 11th (final) Session (E26-29)
Taxes: Exemptions, Credits & Prior Returns; Predictable future problems.
(Small Groups)
- 3:20 10-minute break
- 3:30 - 4:15 Setting Up a Mediation Practice:
Fees, Forms, Insurance, Accreditation, etc.,
Marketing Your Mediation Practice
Panel Discussion
- 4:15 - 4:45 Small Group discussions
- 4:45 - 5:00 Summary, Review, Closing and Evaluation