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**Mediator Mentorship Program (MMP)**

**2024 Cycle One**

In order to become a certified mediator with CCR, individuals must be accepted into the MMP and complete all its components.  **If you cannot attend all training dates,** please contact Israel Putnam, Volunteer Director, to discuss other options including application postponement.

Please note, mediations and trainings take place primarily via Zoom. **Mediators are required to mediate from a private space with an internet-connected laptop or desktop computer with working microphone and camera.**

The MMP consists of the following requirements:

* **Attend one** **informational session** via Zoom. Upcoming sessions will be offered on:
  + Thursday, October 26, 2023 from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. CST
  + Wednesday, November 1, 2023 from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. CST
  + Friday, November 3, from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. CST
* **Submit your application by:**
  + Monday, November 6, 2023 at 9:00 am CST
* **Interview** with a member of the MMP selection committee via Zoom (not all applicants will progress to the interview stage).
* If selected, **attend the following four trainings:**
  + Orientation & Foundations of the CCR method:
    - Monday, January 8, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m**. in person at CCR’s office in the Loop** (Orientation)
    - Tuesday, January 9, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom (Foundations)
  + Caucus & Agreement Writing
    - Tuesday, February 6, 2024 from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. via Zoom
  + Adapted Model Training
    - Wednesday, March 6, 2024 from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. via Zoom
  + Using Tech & Case Type Review
    - Thursday, March 28, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **in person at CCR’s Office in the Loop**
* **Engage in weekly training simulations** **via Zoom** with your mentor and/or cohort (approx. 2 – 4 hours per week starting the first week of January through the first week of April). These are scheduled on your own time and can be completed during weekdays, weekends, or evenings.
* **Complete a certification simulation** (expected by the week of April 1, 2024)
  + CCR Volunteer Mediators are trained, mentored and certified using a performance-based evaluation standard. In order to become certified as a CCR mediator, prospective volunteers must be able to demonstrate a master skill level in the CCR Mediation Model.
  + Live mediations begin after one certifies.
* **MMP graduates are expected to volunteer a minimum of 2 times per month for a period of 18 months after certification.**

**Pre-Requisites for Application**

**Orientation Session**

**Informational Sessions**

Attendance at one of these sessions is required so that you can learn the facets of the program in greater detail, ask questions, and make an informed choice about whether the program is right for your interests and pre-existing scheduling commitments.

**Pre-Training Requirement**

Applicants to the MMP must have completed a 40-hour Mediation Skills Training (MST) program no more than 2-3 years prior to applying. This can be achieved at any organization on the Circuit Court of Cook County’s approved list (that list appears below).

* If you have completed an approved MST within the last 2 years, you are qualified to apply to the MMP
* If you have taken an approved MST within the last 2-3 years, please contact Israel Putnam, Volunteer Director, to discuss your individual circumstances
* If it has been longer than 3 years since your approved MST, you must take a new approved MST prior to applying for the MMP
* If you need to take an approved MST, please [see our website](https://www.ccrchicago.org/mediation-skills-training) for training dates and registration opportunities with CCR. You will need to apply to the MMP after this training is completed

**Circuit Court of Cook County Approved Trainings**

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| --- | --- |
| **Center for Conflict Resolution**  Title: “40-Hour Mediation Skills Training” | **Dominican University**  Title: Mediation Skills Training |
| **De Paul University** College of Law Center For Dispute Resolution Title: “Mediation Certificate Training Course” | **Miller, Andy B Mediation Skills, Inc.** Title: A 40-hour Performance Based Mediation Skills Training |
| **Dispute Resolutions, Inc.** Broward County Bar Association Conference Center Title: “Circuit Civil Mediation Certification Training” | **ICLEF (Indiana Continuing Legal Education Foundation)** Title: “Civil Mediation Training” |
| **Harvard Law School** Harvard Negotiation Institute at Pond Hall  Title: “Mediation Workshop” | **National Judicial College** Title: “Civil Mediation” |
| **Illinois State Bar Association** Illinois State Bar Association Title: 40 Hour Mediation/Arbitration Training | **Northwestern University** Title: “Mediation Skills Training”  (Note: the Northwestern “Divorce” mediation training DOES NOT meet the 40-hour training requirement) |
| **Mediation, Inc**. Title: “Civil Superior Court Mediation” | **Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution Pepperdine University School of Law** Title: “Mediating the Litigated Case” |

**Applying to the Program**

**Committee Review and Selection**

After receiving the applications, a committee of CCR staff and current volunteers review them to narrow the field down to a list of finalists.

If your application makes it into this phase, a member of the selection committee will contact you to set up an interview. Each cycle varies with regard to how many volunteers we need, so sometimes we have many more applicants than we have spaces and we often have to say no to good candidates.

Compelling candidates generally rank highly in one or more of the following categories (among others):

* Availability
* Passion for the mission of CCR
* Background or experience that is reflective of the diverse client base we serve
* Openness to receiving and incorporating feedback in consistency with our [Core Values](https://www.ccrchicago.org/ccr-core-values)
* Language fluency (primarily Spanish, but other languages such a Polish or Arabic can also be a plus)

**Program Commitment**

If selected, you will be required to attend all training sessions associated with your MMP in order to achieve certification. Please ensure that you are available to attend all orientation and training dates before applying.

Once certified, volunteer mediators agree that they will volunteer a minimum of 2 times per month for a period of 18 months after certification. After 18 months, volunteers may keep their certification active by mediating once per month.

**Notification**

Notification of acceptance into the MMP will be **given by the week of December 18, 2023**.

**Cost**

CCR pays a stipend to the Mentors who work with the prospective mediator cohort. In order to offset a portion of the cost of this intensive, professional training, **we ask Mentees to contribute $900.**

However, CCR is committed to making our mediator program accessible regardless of ability to pay. **In order to apply for a need-based scholarship,** simply answer the relevant questions in the MMP application.

While it may seem extraordinary to ask volunteers to pay for their own training, we do want to highlight that this level of attention and customized learning would cost multiple thousands of dollars in a traditional education environment. By partnering with prospective volunteers to offset that cost through volunteering and a reduced monetary fee, we believe we are able to strike a balance between educational and professional benefit to the volunteer as well as service to the community.

**Components of the MMP**

**Three-month Mentorship Program**

The bulk of the program is self-directed, meaning that the Mentee is responsible for scheduling and completing required learning exercises with their mentor and/or other mentees.

All participants must complete a minimum of 8 learning exercises before they can schedule their certification simulation, but often need several more exercises to master the required skills. On average, mentees spend 2-4 hours a week for about 3 months working on the necessary skills to achieve certification-level proficiency.

CCR provides both required and suggested exercises through our MMP Curriculum, with the Mentor being responsible for selecting the specific exercises and providing guidance with regard to the skills progression.

Mentors come from diverse walks of life professionally and experientially. They are highly experienced CCR mediators and coaches who have received special training in teaching the CCR mediation model. By assigning a mentor to each prospective volunteer, the training experience is individualized and supports a Mentee’s understanding and development of best practices within the CCR model.

**Pre-scheduled Training Sessions**

These sessions are required for teaching essential logistics of mediating cases at CCR and in the Cook County court system. They are also an opportunity for an early assessment of how students are doing with learning and implementation of new skills, while providing the foundation for building connections within the CCR volunteer community.

Covered topics include caucusing with individual parties, concluding mediations and writing agreements, adapting mediation skills within different time constraints, using technology platforms to sign up for cases and mediate, and reviewing unique facets of the various types of cases referred for mediation.

**Certification Simulation**

The MMP culminates in a practical exam where the mentee demonstrates the requisite skills in a simulated mediation session. All mediators must demonstrate a master skill level within the CCR mediation model in order to be certified to take “live” cases.

Certification sims are pre-scheduled at the beginning of the cohort to provide a target goal for the Mentee and Mentor to work towards. If a Mentee does not certify at the first opportunity, clear and detailed feedback is provided on what areas are still in need of growth, and further certification opportunities are scheduled.

**Volunteer Requirements and Benefits Following Mediation Mentorship Program**

CCR intends that our mediators keep a consistently high skill level when volunteering with us. To do this, we ask volunteer mediators to fulfill the following **requirements** in order to maintain their active mediator status:

* The volunteer must schedule to mediate for CCR **at least twice a month for a period of 18 months.** One mediation per month must be scheduled for the Mediator Zoom, where mediators use the adapted model.
* To maintain active status, the volunteer must schedule to mediate for CCR at least once a month after the initial 18-month period.
* The volunteer must participate in CCR’s Peer Review process within the first 12-months of certification.
* The volunteer must attend at least two CCR Continuing Education Programs every 12 months.

CCR also offers the following **benefits** to volunteer mediators:

* Experienced staff/mediators present at all mediations to offer support and debriefing
* Peer review process for ongoing skills feedback
* Growth opportunities into different case types
* Monthly Continuing Education events in the field of ADR
* Networking and social events
* Non-mediating volunteer opportunities
* CCR newsletter to keep volunteers informed of CCR activities, as well as developments in the dispute resolution field

**Contact**

If you have any questions about the Mediator Mentorship Program or application, please contact Israel Putnam, Volunteer Director, at [mmp@ccrchicago.org](mailto:mmp@ccrchicago.org).