

Leanne Turnbull and Angela Mallard

The Court Mediation Program in BC



Leanne



Angela

Since 1999, the Court Mediation Program has been offering trained but inexperienced mediators the opportunities to get hands-on experience mediating small claims cases under the supervision of skilled mediators who act as mentors.

Twenty seven BC Notaries have already completed the Court Mediation Practicum Program; seven are or have been Provincial Court (Civil) Mediators (PC(C)M). Of those seven, two now serve as Program Mentors: Alex Ning and Sally O’Sullivan Lee, the first woman President of The Society of Notaries Public of BC. Says Sally:

I was very fortunate to be in the first five-day mediation course that gave Notaries the necessary skills to apply for a position as a student mediator. I came to the course with no expectations; it was just another course to receive more skills for my Notary practice. What I found was that not only did I love the process, it was a great fit for my business! As Notaries, we are used to listening to people’s stories and, with mediation, I received great enjoyment seeing

people resolve their problems in a way that was respectful, allowing them to move forward with their lives.

The Court Mediation Program runs two practicum classes per year...

After the initial mediation course, I continued with my mediation education and added mediation to my Notary practice. After taking the Court Mediation Program’s exam, I became a Provincial Court Civil Mediator [now called a PC(C)M], mediating a variety of cases including construction, condominium, unpaid business debt, and property disputes. After a number of years in this role, I was invited to be a mentor for new students. I co-mediate with students, spending time with them prior to and following the mediation and making helpful suggestions on how they can expand and grow their skills. I have always believed in sharing my knowledge and expertise. Mentoring provides me with a wonderful outlet for this process.

The program is dedicated to interest-based mediation for small claims court cases where the parties are empowered to reach solutions that meet their own interests, rather than have someone else

decide the fate of the matter for them. If the case isn’t settled, the parties go on to a settlement conference and trial before a judge.

If you’ve taken the five-day Notary Foundation Mediation Workshop, you already have the required qualifications for participation in the practicum offered by the Court Mediation Program. Practicum mediators in the program co-mediate in 10 small claims mediations under the supervision of a mentor.

At the end of each session, the mentor provides feedback to assist the practicum mediators to improve their mediation skills and fine-tune their style. Some mediators choose to increase their mediation experience by making an application to mediate in small claims as a Provincial Court (Civil) Mediator. The PC(C)M roster of mediators began in 2000.

The creation of the PC(C)M roster enabled the program to pilot expansion to registries outside the Lower Mainland. This was possible due to enthusiastic support from Island PCC mediators like Rick and Carol Evans and through a generous donation from the Notary Foundation of BC.

The Court Mediation Program runs two practicum classes per year in two small claims registries on the Island (Nanaimo and Victoria) and three in the

Lower Mainland (North Vancouver), Robson Square (Vancouver), and Surrey.

The \$2000 fee for the practicum includes two days of orientation, two or three evening case-discussion sessions, nine mediation sessions with a mentor, and one mentored co-mediation session with a classmate.

Mediation sessions are scheduled based on case numbers and the busy schedules of practicum students, mentors, and PC(C)Ms. Special scheduling accommodations can be made for mediators attending from out of town.

The experience gained through participation in the practicum program is highly regarded. Mediators have travelled from Alberta and Manitoba to complete their 10 mediation sessions.

Within British Columbia, two participants from the Northern Region, two from Cariboo Chilcotin, 19 from Thompson Okanagan, and three from the Coast Mountain Region have taken the practicum.

Leanne Rebantad, Notary Public from Powell River, speaks of her experience:

Mediating civil cases through the Court Mediation Program gave me mediation experience I never would have obtained in Powell River. The skills I learned also benefitted me in my Notary practice. I hope the Court Mediation Program will eventually be available to the residents of all the small communities throughout British Columbia.

For more information on the Court Mediation Program or the practicum, check out the Website: www.courtmediation.com. You may also call 604-684-1300 or 1-877-656-1300 toll free. ▲

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