

Are you prepared for mediation?

In order for you to get the most out of mediating your issue with the USDA, you need to have your financial information and associated paperwork in order. You will need to know what your financial situation is and, if possible, what options are available to you.

The IFAS Cooperative Extension Service has Family and Consumer Sciences agents throughout the state who are trained and available to assist you so that you will be better prepared to engage constructively in mediation with USDA.

For information contact Dr. Jo Turner, IFAS/Florida Youth and Community Services, at (352) 392-1945, Ext. 221 or leave a message for Dr. Turner at (toll-free) 1-888-712-9421. Dr. Turner will assign a nearby agent to contact you.

The agent will then contact you and, if you agree, schedule a meeting with you to discuss your situation. It is important that you bring all paperwork related to your situation with you to the meeting with the agent. Your conversation with the agent will be in confidence.

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How do I participate?

If you wish to have a USDA decision mediated, please submit a request for mediation as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from receipt of the adverse decision letter.

Contact us for more information:

Florida Agricultural Mediation Service
University of Florida - IFAS
1038 McCarty Hall
P.O. Box 110210
Gainesville, FL 32611-0210
Telephone: 1-888-712-9421
Fax: 1-352-846-0458
Website: fams.ifas.ufl.edu



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Have you
received an
adverse decision
from a USDA
agency?



Florida

Agricultural
Mediation
Service



Have you received an adverse decision from a USDA agency?

If you have, and you disagree with the decision, you may be eligible to resolve your dispute through mediation. Mediation is an alternative to a formal appeal process and may save you time and money.

Participating in mediation does not take away your right to make a formal appeal.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process during which disputing parties

are guided through a thorough discussion of the issues to help them carefully identify and consider possible resolutions.

Mediators are neutral and do not decide who is right or wrong. Mediators have no authority to require anyone to do anything. The parties themselves are responsible for devising a resolution to their dispute and

for following through with it.

If the parties do not reach an agreement, all administrative and other remedies remain. Because the mediation process is confidential, discussions with the mediator and other parties cannot be used for other purposes as defined by the USDA/FSA rules.

How long will it take?

The mediation program is designed for expedient dispute resolution. The mediation sessions generally last about two hours. However, depending upon the complexity of

the issues, more than one session may be needed.

What does mediation cost?

There is no cost; mediation is free.

Who will mediate?

Mediators provided by the Florida Agricultural Mediation Service (FAMS) include program staff, as well as private mediators throughout the state who are contracted on a case-by-case basis. All mediators have completed mediation training and will be educated about the agricultural issues involved in the cases they are assigned.

FAMS is administered by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS). For assistance with any questions, contact the Program Coordinator at the Mediation Office at: 1-888-712-9421.



IFAS EXTENSION