



PeaceWiseHelp Mediation Fact Sheet

PeaceWiseHelp is PeaceWise's assisted peacemaking service arm.

PeaceWiseHelp provides the following assisted peacemaking services:

1. PeaceWiseHelp mediation; and
2. PeaceWiseHelp conflict coaching.

This document explains what **PeaceWiseHelp Mediation** is and what it entails.

1. What is mediation?

Mediation involves one or two people, not involved with the conflict, appointed as an impartial intermediary to help two or more conflicted parties resolve their conflict. (PeaceWiseHelp mediation usually has two people appointed as impartial intermediaries).

2. What is PeaceWiseHelp mediation?

A PeaceWiseHelp mediation is a mediation process which:

- spiritually encourages and practically equips two or more parties in a conflict (all who voluntarily agree to participate in the process) to address both the relational and material issues (if any) that have arisen between them by seeking a God honouring reconciliation of the damaged relationship and a reasonable resolution to the issues; and
- includes PeaceWiseHelp conflict coaching of the parties as an integral part of the preparation for the PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting.

3. Who can use the PeaceWiseHelp mediation?

PeaceWiseHelp mediation is available to two or more parties in a conflict who:

- desire to reconcile their relationship and resolve the conflict they have with the other party/ies with which they are in conflict; and
- willingly accept to fully participate in the service knowing it is provided from a gospel centred, Biblical foundation and Christian worldview. (See *PeaceWise Foundational Statements*).

PeaceWiseHelp mediators will be respectful, sensitive and care for all parties, regardless of their worldview or beliefs.

4. PeaceWiseHelp Assessment

Not all conflicts are suitable for or best served by PeaceWiseHelp involvement.

Enquirers will be required to provide basic but sufficient information about the conflict by completing the PeaceWiseHelp Assisted Peacemaking Intake Form for PeaceWise to assess its suitability to serve. All information provided will be held in the strictest confidence.

On receipt of sufficient information PeaceWise will assess the request and advise the enquirer:

- whether PeaceWiseHelp can serve in the situation;
- what it believes is the most suitable PeaceWiseHelp service; and
- any terms, conditions or restrictions of the PeaceWiseHelp services offered.

If PeaceWise assesses that it cannot provide an assisted peacemaking service, PeaceWise will do its best to provide suggestions on what conflicted parties (or an interested organisation) may do to respond to the conflict.

5. What is the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process?

A. Co-Mediation model

PeaceWiseHelp mediation typically involves two PeaceWiseHelp mediators working together as a team. This co-mediation model is the PeaceWiseHelp mediation preferred approach and brings significant benefits to the parties. Some of the advantages of co-mediation include:

For the Parties:

1. the mediation team can together better represent the parties' diverse characteristics (e.g. male/female, church/school/other professional or ministry background, older/younger, etc.);
2. a party has a better chance of feeling a sense of trust with at least one of the two mediators;
3. the preparation, prayer, insight into issues, Scriptural perspectives and godly wisdom of two is stronger than with only one;
4. the parties have the advantage of the combined skills of two mediators, whose skills usually enhance and complement each other;
5. mediators working together can model to the parties healthy and biblical ways of communicating and responding to issues; and
6. there is a better "check" on mediators' possible biases or shortcomings.

For the Mediators:

1. having a partner eases the load and tension of a mediation, especially in difficult cases and multi-party situations;
2. parties will be more inclined to focus on restoring relationship and addressing issues with the other party/ies, when there is a mediation team involved, rather than seeking to "win over" a sole mediator; and
3. PeaceWiseHelp co-mediation enables mediators to learn from each other, including less experienced mediators learning from more experienced mediators.

B. What is the aim of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation?

The aim of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation is to encourage and equip all parties to reflect on the situation and decide to carry out the most loving response to the other party/ies in a God honouring manner, within the safety of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation and assistance of PeaceWiseHelp mediators.

PeaceWiseHelp mediators will listen to all parties and assist them to reconcile their relationship as well as find resolution of any material issues. However, the ultimate outcome of any PeaceWise mediation is directly impacted by the parties' willingness to self-reflect and take responsibility for their own attitudes and behaviour.

One of the great strengths of any mediation process is that it is the parties' who have the responsibility (and not the mediator) for what is shared and what decisions are made.

Whilst PeaceWiseHelp mediators will encourage the parties to work towards reconciliation of their relationship and resolution of the issues, the PeaceWiseHelp mediators will not speak on behalf of either party or impose any solution or outcome on the parties.

C. Rules of Procedure for PeaceWiseHelp Mediation

PeaceWiseHelp mediations are conducted according to the Rules of Procedure for PeaceWiseHelp Mediation. The Rules were devised originally by Peacemaker Ministries (based in the USA) and adapted for Australia. These Rules provide structure, safety, and guidelines to the facilitation of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation.

The Rules of Procedure for PeaceWiseHelp Mediation is an attachment to the PeaceWiseHelp Mediation Agreement and will be given to parties and explained prior to any PeaceWiseHelp mediation taking place. It is also available on our website at www.peacewise.org.au

D. What are the steps in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation?

1. Pre-mediation meeting conflict coaching

A PeaceWiseHelp mediation will typically involve two conflict coaching sessions with each party. All the activities undertaken in a PeaceWiseHelp conflict coaching service also occur in these conflict coaching meetings.

At the first conflict coaching meeting that a party has with a PeaceWiseHelp mediator, the party can tell their story, the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process will be explained, and the party can ask any questions they have regarding the process.

Conflict coaching meetings that happen during a PeaceWiseHelp mediation process may be conducted virtually (e.g. via zoom) or phone (if face to face meetings cannot be practically conducted).

2. Mediation Meeting

During a PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting (i.e. the joint meeting where all parties are present) the parties will be encouraged to tell their stories and raise and work through the issues together.

A PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting may be paused:

- so that the PeaceWiseHelp mediator can hold private meetings with the parties, if they believe it will help the process; or
- if a party would like to share some matter in private with the PeaceWiseHelp mediator.

Following a private meeting held during a PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting, the PeaceWiseHelp mediator will encourage the party to share appropriately with the other party/ies any information provided in the private meeting.

In a PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting, the following agenda will typically be used:

- **G**reeting and ground rules
 - make introductions and agree how the parties will work together
- **O**pening statements
 - each party is asked to briefly explain what he or she hopes will happen out of the mediation
- **S**tory telling
 - each party will tell their story and hear the other party's perspective
- **P**roblem identification and clarification
 - clearly define central issues and interests
- **E**xplore solutions
 - brainstorm options, evaluate them reasonably and objectively
- **L**ead to agreement
 - encourage and document things that the parties agree on and what they will each do

A PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting will require at least one full day (and may take more time depending on the situation and the number of parties involved). Parties are requested to set aside at least one and a half days, to allow for sufficient time to complete a PeaceWiseHelp mediation.

Wherever possible, PeaceWise recommends that a PeaceWiseHelp mediations be conducted in person with all parties in attendance. Where this is not possible a PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting may be held by video conference (e.g. through Zoom).

PeaceWise and the PeaceWiseHelp mediators reserve the right to cease the process at any time if it is deemed best or appropriate. Parties may also choose to withdraw from the process at any time. However, parties will be encouraged not to withdraw unilaterally nor do so, without prior discussion with the PeaceWiseHelp mediators.

3. Post-mediation follow up

About 7-14 days after the PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting, the mediators will meet each party privately by video conferencing. The purpose of this meeting is to check with each party and see how they are going with the decisions and agreements they made at the PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting.

E. Others' involvement

Where a PeaceWiseHelp mediation is arranged by an interested organisation, PeaceWise requires the name and contact details of a representative of the that organisation to assist in the logistics and administration of the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process.

A support person for a party or an observer for an interested organisation may be present at PeaceWiseHelp conflict coaching meetings and/or the mediation meeting if it is considered helpful and all parties and the PeaceWiseHelp mediator's consent. Any such person will not be permitted to speak at the meetings unless asked by the PeaceWiseHelp mediators and will be required to agree to and sign a confidentiality agreement.

For training and mentoring purposes, consent of the parties may be sought that a trainee or supervisor of the PeaceWiseHelp mediator be permitted to be present through part or the whole of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation.

F. PeaceWiseHelp mediation outcome

Neither PeaceWise nor the PeaceWiseHelp mediators can guarantee participation in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation will result in reconciliation of relationship between the parties or a resolution of material issues. However, PeaceWise and the PeaceWiseHelp mediators will be working with the parties and praying for the very best outcome for all.

At the conclusion of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting:

- the PeaceWiseHelp mediators will assist the parties to craft a written agreement summarising what took place and what agreements have been made by the parties; and
- the parties will complete an evaluation form on the PeaceWiseHelp mediation and the PeaceWiseHelp mediators involved.

G. Reporting of Mediation Outcome

If an interested organisation is a signatory to the PeaceWiseHelp Mediation Agreement it will be expected that an appropriate representative from the interested organisation will be invited to attend at the conclusion of the PeaceWiseHelp mediation meeting, so that the parties may verbally advise the representative the outcome of the PeaceWiseHelp mediation.

H. Parties' Mediation care

PeaceWise recommends that parties intending to participate in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation ask their church pastor/leader and/or one or two spiritually mature friends/mentors to support and pray that they will honour God - before, during and after the PeaceWiseHelp mediation concludes.

I. Who are the PeaceWiseHelp Mediators?

PeaceWiseHelp mediators may be employed staff or contractors. They are utilised on the basis of what PeaceWise believes is the "best fit" for the situation, as well as their individual availability. Accordingly, it may take PeaceWise some time to locate suitable PeaceWiseHelp mediators. PeaceWiseHelp mediators used by PeaceWise:

- are spiritually mature Christians;

- will be using the Bible and praying during the PeaceWiseHelp mediation;
- will be encouraging and challenging parties to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour (and for those who consider themselves Christians - what the Bible/God has to say about the conflict); and
- have completed PeaceWise mediation training.

Will PeaceWiseHelp mediators be impartial?

- Any prior association that a PeaceWiseHelp mediator has with any of the parties (or an interested organisation, if any) will be disclosed up front, and all parties must be happy to proceed if such a prior association exists.
- A PeaceWiseHelp mediator will be 'impartial', in the sense they will act in an even-handed way, will have no direct personal interest (financial or otherwise) in the outcome of the conflict and will treat the parties fairly during the process.

Will PeaceWiseHelp mediators be neutral?

- A PeaceWiseHelp mediator will not necessarily be 'neutral', in the sense of not commenting on relational or material issues and having no input other than to facilitate the discussion. This is because there may be times when it is appropriate to bring the relevance of what the Bible teaches, or a party's expressed values, into the context of the conflict, and to encourage the parties to consider their actions in the light of these things. This will always be done sensitively, and typically will be raised with one party privately first.
- The reason this kind of contribution may sometimes be appropriate is because unlike secular mediation, PeaceWiseHelp mediators are committed to help parties achieve relational restoration, and not simply to address presenting material issues.

What role do Christian principles and the parties' values play in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation?

PeaceWiseHelp mediators will likely raise and encourage the parties to reflect upon, during the course of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation, Christian principles (and also broadly accepted moral principles), such as, each party being willing to:

- be honest (Eph 4:25) and keep their word (Matt 5:37)
- own what is theirs to own (Ps 139:23-24, Matt 7:1-5)
- being open to truly seeing the other party's point of view and to look to that party's interests as well as their own (Phil 2: 3-4, 1 Cor 10:24)
- change harmful attitudes and behaviour (Prov 28:13)
- being open to forgiveness and reconciliation (Eph 4:32, Col 3:13, Matt 18:21-35).

J. What do parties have to do?

Participation of any person in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation requires them to voluntarily agree to:

- prioritise their participation in and scheduling of PeaceWiseHelp meetings;
- complete and provide to the PeaceWiseHelp mediators any preparatory work requested;
- seriously and honestly self-reflect on their own contribution to the conflict;
- co-operate with the PeaceWiseHelp mediators and abide by the Rules of Procedure of PeaceWiseHelp Mediation throughout the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process (including during the pre-mediation meeting conflict coaching meetings);
- pay all the requisite fees (if not already agreed to be paid by an interested organisation); and
- complete an evaluation on the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process at the conclusion of the process.

K. What are the costs?

PeaceWise charges:

- a non-refundable case establishment fee of \$325;
- a case administration fee of \$80 per hour (with the usual total fee ranging from \$280-\$360, depending on the complexity of the case);
- PeaceWiseHelp mediator fees on a per hourly basis, ranging from \$80 to \$150 per hour, depending on the PeaceWiseHelp mediator's experience and expertise;
- expenses for out-of-pocket costs and allowances, for example travel and accommodation costs; and
- an allowance for travel time charged at an hourly rate.

PeaceWiseHelp mediation total costs (excluding expenses) will typically be for cases involving:

- two parties - between \$5,500 and \$7,500 + expenses
- two to four parties – between \$7,500 and \$11,500 + expenses
- multi-party or complex cases – between \$11,500 and \$26,500 + expenses

PeaceWise will provide the enquirer with a written estimate of the fees and expenses of the PeaceWiseHelp mediation prior to any obligation to proceed.

For a PeaceWiseHelp mediation process to be confirmed and prior to any significant work being undertaken:

- the PeaceWiseHelp Mediation Agreement must be signed by parties (and any interested organisation); and
- the non-refundable PeaceWiseHelp case establishment fee and 50% of the combined estimated case administration and PeaceWiseHelp mediators' fees must be paid.

If at any time PeaceWise assesses that there will be some variation to the estimated PeaceWiseHelp mediation costs or expenses, PeaceWise will advise the parties (and/or the interested organisation, if any) in a timely fashion so an informed decision can be made by the parties and/or interested organisation, as to whether to continue the process. Express written agreement to paying any increase in costs and/or expenses will be required for the PeaceWiseHelp mediation process to continue.

We appreciate that engaging PeaceWise to provide a PeaceWiseHelp mediation is a significant financial investment in the lives of and in the relationship between the parties in conflict.

For every conflict, the parties (and any interested organisation) need to assess the costs (both personal and financial) of participating in a PeaceWiseHelp mediation process, when weighed against other alternatives available, especially as they seek to assess their response to passages such as Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8 and John 17:20-23.

We believe that a PeaceWiseHelp mediation represents a God honouring alternative to secular mediation or litigation, and that there is great value in investing in a biblical process of restoration of relationships and addressing material issues. God calls his people to be known by their love and unity, so how Christians respond to conflict (either positive or negative) has wide ranging consequences, not just spiritually and relationally but legally, financially, and emotionally as well.

(If finances are an issue, it may be possible to find alternative ways to subsidise or otherwise provide for the financial costs of a PeaceWiseHelp mediation process, such as organisational or denominational support, a special donation from a concerned Christian brother or sister or a review in the timing or prioritisation of using funds available for resourcing issues that arise in ministry.)

We encourage you to prayerfully consider these matters, and consider the opportunities to glorify God, serve others and grow to be like Jesus Christ that your particular situation, whilst unwanted, represents.

We prayerfully look forward to being able to serve you in your present circumstances.