



## Maine Human Rights Commission

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**Amy M. Sneirson**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Barbara Archer Hirsch**  
COMMISSION COUNSEL

September 9, 2019

Dear Colleagues:

The Maine Human Rights Commission (the “Commission”), the state agency charged with enforcing Maine’s anti-discrimination laws, investigates complaints of unlawful discrimination and retaliation in employment, housing, education, access to public accommodations, and extension of credit. Our agency’s mandate includes giving parties an opportunity to resolve disputes, and the Commission has over its history taken various approaches to such resolution efforts. Seven years ago, the Maine Human Rights Act (“MHRA”) specifically authorized the Commission to establish a mediation program, and we established a five-member roster of highly-qualified and experienced mediators to provide mediation in Commission cases.

Since then, the Commission’s Third Party Neutral Mediation Program (“Program”) has proven to be a tremendous success; in Fiscal Year 2018, our rostered mediators facilitated settlement in 62% of cases mediated, at no cost to the State of Maine. Each party in a case paid a small fee toward mediation (\$200 per party in a case), with the funds passing through to mediators (via a \$350 stipend), and the remainder going to pay for indigent parties’ participation in the Program. As word has spread about the Program’s cost-effective and high-quality mediations, the Program’s scope has more than doubled. The Commission also utilizes the services of our rostered mediators to conduct post-reasonable grounds mediations (which the MHRA calls “conciliations”); we utilize separate contracts for these conciliation services, but the arrangement – contracted-for services for a set stipend per case – are essentially the same. Though the Commission added mediators to the roster in 2017, our existing roster has been stretched thin, so we are looking to add several mediators to the Program’s roster at this time. *Now is a great time to apply, especially as our Commissioners voted in June 2019 to approve the first increase in the mediator stipend in seven years!* Parties now pay \$225 toward mediation, and mediators receive a \$400 stipend per case.

Applications to join the Program roster must be received by the Commission on or before 5 p.m. on September 30, 2019. We hope to make our roster selections by October 28, 2019.

Enclosed is an information sheet with more details about the Program and this call for applications. For a copy of the Mediation Program Handbook adopted by the Commission, or for more information, please contact us at [mediation@mhrc.maine.gov](mailto:mediation@mhrc.maine.gov).

Thank you in advance for considering this important work, and for assisting us with distributing this information to potentially interested parties.

Sincerely,

Amy M. Sneirson Executive Director  
attachment

# Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program Information Sheet

## Request for Qualifications

Candidates interested in serving as impartial mediators in cases filed with the Commission can upload a statement of interest, qualifications and experience on our [online application portal](#). Submissions must be received by the Commission on or before 5 p.m. on September 30, 2019.

Once you complete your online submission, you will receive an email confirmation. Submissions will be received and reviewed by the Executive Director. Invitations to join the roster of mediators will issue within 30 days after the closing date of this solicitation.

### Mediator Qualifications

The Commission will focus on the following criteria to determine which candidates will be invited to join our Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program roster:

- Mediator training (preferably multi-day training that includes role-playing techniques);
- Certifications or membership on other mediator rosters;
- Relevant experience as a mediator;
- Knowledge of the Maine Human Rights Act and related civil rights laws; and
- Three letters of reference (to be supplied with the candidate's application, from parties or attorneys who have mediated with the applicant and can attest to the applicant's skills and experience as a mediator).
- Active professional liability coverage required.

### Program Administration and Coordination

When assigned a case through the Commission's Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program, mediators will be paid a stipend, which shall be expected to cover the mediator's travel and other expenses. The stipend will be \$400 per mediation, although that may increase or decrease in later fiscal years, at the discretion of the Commission. We generally expect mediations to occur at the Commission offices in Augusta and will provide suitable, accessible meeting space. The Commission will provide some training regarding the Maine Human Rights Act and related federal laws to rostered mediators, but also anticipates that selected mediators will have significant knowledge of these laws before joining the roster.

[Mediation Program Handbook \(PDF\)](#)