



## Mediation in disputes



A mediation office can provide help in many kinds of disputes. Mediation may be used in disputes in which at least one party is a natural person. A dispute may be referred for mediation if the claims in the case are minor (section 1 of the Act on Conciliation in Criminal and Certain Civil Cases 1015/2005). The mediation office will assess whether it is appropriate to deal with the dispute in mediation.

### **Mediation can be requested by**

- a party to the dispute
- a custodian or guardian
- the police, an educational institution, social services or another authority (e.g. municipality).

A request for mediation will be submitted to the mediation office. Participation in mediation is voluntary and free of charge for the parties.

A dispute may be, for example, a human relationship or interaction

problem that causes concern and distress, or makes it difficult to manage one's own or shared affairs.

### **Mediation provides an opportunity to**

- meet safely
- discuss what has happened
- correct the damage caused by the incident
- together, find ways to live a more dispute-free life.

### **Disputes suitable for mediation may be related to:**

- school
- social media
- working life
- pets
- relationships between neighbours and housing
- intimate relationships and friendships
- property and finances.

A dispute may also be one for which an investigation request has been made to the police, but the police have stated that it is not a criminal matter. Even if a criminal offence has not been committed, the party that has caused damage may be liable. A case that is in mediation may also meet the elements of a criminal offence, but the injured party has not wanted to submit a report to the police in the case.

No road or border agreements, child maintenance and visitation agreements, division of assets or distribution of inheritance are made in mediation. Mediation can also help to remedy human relationships in these situations so that it is possible to negotiate and agree on matters elsewhere (e.g. at a law or legal aid office or a child welfare officer). The mediation office also provides service guidance.