

Texas Dispute Resolution System™

Domestic Relations Office

Texas Rural Mediation Services™



Dispute Resolution Training Institute™

Office of Dispute Resolution

Mental Health and Mediation: Promoting the Well-Being of Involved Parties

July 27 - 29, 2021

Learning Objectives:

- To acknowledge that people come into mediation with different states of being and wellness;
- To identify mental health triggers that may interfere in the mediation process; and
- To explore Best Practices and create a meaningful way to resolve disputes while being sensitive to the mental health needs of the parties involved.

Day One: July 27, 2021

12:00 p.m.

Welcome

D. Gene Valentini

Adjunct Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law
Director, Office of Dispute Resolution for Lubbock County
Lubbock, Texas

12:15 p.m.

Importance of Well-Being and Mental Health

Review the definition of well-being, mental health, and mental illness. Why should well-being be promoted for families? What is the relevance when someone is faced with a dispute, whether or not it is pending in court? Provide insight into Recommendation 6 of the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators Resolution 4.

Honorable Amy McFarland, J.D.

Associate Circuit Judge
Eleventh Judicial Circuit
McLean County, Illinois

12:45 p.m.

Overview of Mental Health Issues in the Judicial System

What kinds of mental health issues do judges see when interacting with parties? How has the judiciary responded?

Honorable John Specia, Jr., J.D.

Jurist in Residence
Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health
San Antonio, Texas

A Department of Lubbock County

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1:15 p.m.

Impact of Mental Health on Mediation - and Vice Versa

Discuss how mediation is impacted by a participant who might be experiencing symptoms of a mental illness and how a mediation can impact the person with a mental illness. What are some examples? What are some possible consequences? What are some issues that attorneys in mediation need to consider?

Brian Shannon, J.D.

Horn Distinguished Professor of Law

Texas Tech University School of Law

Board of Trustees, StarCare Specialty Health System

Lubbock, Texas

2:00 p.m.

Adjourn

DRAFT

Day Two: July 28, 2021

12:00 p.m.

Welcome

D. Gene Valentini
Adjunct Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law
Director, Office of Dispute Resolution for Lubbock County
Lubbock, Texas

AND/OR

Honorable Drue Farmer, J.D.
County Court-at-Law Number 2, Lubbock County
Board Chair, Board of Trustees
StarCare Specialty Health System
Lubbock, Texas

12:15 p.m.

Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Issues and How to Respond

Provide an overview of the most common diagnosed mental illnesses, most common undiagnosed mental illnesses, and other mental conditions that could affect a person's cognitive functions (i.e. stress, emotions, etc.). Are there any anticipated changes in what may be encountered, especially due to the pandemic? Discuss how these conditions, if not adequately treated, could impact someone in a conflict. What are some ways someone could respond to ensure maximum communication?

Amanda Yaeger, LCSW
Director of Community Based Mental Health Services
StarCare Specialty Health System
Lubbock, Texas

1:45 p.m.

Questions and Answers

2:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Day Three: July 29, 2021

12:00 p.m.

Welcome

D. Gene Valentini
Adjunct Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law
Director, Office of Dispute Resolution for Lubbock County
Lubbock, Texas

AND/OR

Honorable Drue Farmer, J.D.
County Court-at-Law Number 2, Lubbock County
Board Chair, Board of Trustees
StarCare Specialty Health System
Lubbock, Texas

12:15 p.m.

Tying It All Together: Takeaways for Mediators

Provide mediators with techniques to better support well-being in mediation participants, integrating signs, symptoms, and how to respond as discussed previously.

Consider:

- *Structure (private mediator v. public // volunteer v. professional)*
- *Types of cases (Family, non-family, criminal, etc.)*
- *Attorney's role - help or hinder?*
- *Training needs - for mediators and attorneys*
- *Facilitating party competencies*

Brian Shannon, J.D.
Horn Distinguished Professor of Law
Texas Tech University School of Law
Board of Trustees, StarCare Specialty Health System
Lubbock, Texas

AND

Lewis Dabney
Executive Director
Key Bridge Foundation
Washington, D.C.

1:15 p.m.

Moving Forward

How does the emergence of virtual mediations effect all we have learned, so far? What trends are expected?

Joi M. Hollis, Ph.D.

Division Director

Family Center of the Conciliation Court

Arizona Superior Court in Pima County

Tucson, Arizona

1:45 p.m.

Questions and Answers

2:00 p.m.

Adjourn

DRAFT