

What is Mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process in which a neutral third party (the mediator) assists farmers, agricultural lenders, agencies, families and members of the general public to resolve disputes collaboratively, outside of the traditional legal and regulatory processes.

What is Maryland ACReS?

Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service (ACReS) is the official U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) certified agricultural mediation program for the state of Maryland. Participants may be referred by USDA or other agencies, or contact us themselves.

***Don't wait
to mediate!***



This program is partially funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Kevin Atticks
Secretary of Agriculture

Steven Connelly
Deputy Secretary



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Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service



**Finding Solutions
Together**

<https://mda.maryland.gov/Pages/acrs.aspx>



ACReS Mediation Program



What are the benefits of mediation

The mediation process tends to be more time and **cost-efficient** than the alternatives, like going to court. Mediation also allows the participants self-determination; the mediator does not have decision-making authority, allowing the participants to design the solutions themselves that will work best for them and to which they are willing to commit.

What can be mediated?

★ Decisions

Unfavorable decisions made by USDA agencies

★ Conflicts

Conflicts between farmers and their non-farming neighbors or communities

★ Credit

- Agricultural credit issues
- Land or equipment leasing disputes

★ Disputes

Any dispute potentially affecting the profitability of an agricultural operation.

★ Planning

Family farm concerns and planning for retirement/transition

In the state of Maryland, agricultural operations include aquaculture, tree farms, beekeeping, horticulture and urban farming.

Mediation is:

☑ NEUTRAL

The mediator does not represent any of the participants and has no vested interest in the outcome.

☑ VOLUNTARY

All participants come to mediation of their own free will and can leave at any time.

☑ CONFIDENTIAL

Participants agree that communication that occurs in mediation will be confidential, and will not be used in any subsequent appeal or legal action

Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service

How much will this cost?

An initial consultation with program staff and the initial mediation session are provided at no cost. If additional sessions are necessary, nominal costs will be shared between the participants. Full or partial waivers of fees may be negotiated based on income. The participants pays for any legal, financial or technical advisors, if needed.

Want to learn more?

Contact Maryland ACReS at:

Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service

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