

**OFFICES OF THE DISTRICT JUDGES**

**OFFICES OF THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW JUDGES**

**Criminal Justice Center Williamson  
County  
405 Martin Luther King Street  
Georgetown, Texas 78626**

TO: Attorneys with civil or family cases pending in Williamson

County, Texas RE: **PROCEDURES FOR** Settlement Week **March**

**30 - April 3, 2020**

The Williamson County Bar Association, in conjunction with the District Court Judges and the County Court at Law Judges, has organized the next Settlement Week for the week of **March 30, 2020** setting aside *five* days to facilitate the settlement of civil and family law cases now pending in Williamson County courts. During these five days, attorneys are given the opportunity to appear with their clients, or representatives with authority, to conduct negotiations and potentially settle in the presence of a volunteer mediator.

The success of this project depends on you, as attorneys or parties, submitting cases for mediation. Any one of the attorneys representing a party in a case, or either of the parties, may set that case for mediation. In order to assure mediations are set at a time when both parties are available, the following **procedures** will be required. **The party setting the case for mediation shall confer with the other party to determine available times for mediation. The times for which both parties are available shall be submitted with the mediation request.**

In order to make this mandated process successful, we will need your cooperation in submitting cases as well as volunteering your time to act as mediators. Participants, including the lawyers and mediators, MAY NOT reschedule or cancel a mediation once ordered. A case MAY NOT be removed without permission from the Judge of the court who ordered the mediation. Should a case settle prior to mediation, please contact the Mediation Coordinator, Amanda Vega, immediately so that she can notify the mediator. Please be on time for the start of mediation, whether 8:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m., and be respectful of the Clerks' Offices and Bailiffs' time. Mediation should be concluded no later than 4:30 p.m. to allow the Clerks' Offices time to process any paperwork from your mediation before 5:00 p.m. The doors to the building will be locked at 5:00 p.m.

As an aid to settlement, the Judges of the Williamson County District Courts and County Courts at Law strongly encourage participating attorneys to exchange settlement demands and responses no later than **February 28, 2020**.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find an information sheet, a Settlement Week submission sheet, and a Volunteer Mediator Application form. **THE COMPLETED SETTLEMENT WEEK SUBMISSION SHEET AND/OR VOLUNTEER MEDIATOR APPLICATION MUST BE RETURNED, via email, by February 28, 2020.** Please remember that the submitted cases are given setting preference based on the order in which they are received.

Honorable Betsy F. Lambeth  
Local Administrative District Judge for Williamson County, Texas

**SETTLEMENT WEEK – VOLUNTEER MEDIATOR APPLICATION FORM**

**Return, via email, by February 28, 2020 to:**     **Amanda Vega, Mediation Coordinator**  
Via email to:     [wilcomediation@wilco.org](mailto:wilcomediation@wilco.org).

**Name:**

**SBN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Firm:**

**Office Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Office Phone No.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone No:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(required)**

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(required)**

**Years of Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prior Mediator  
Training:**

**Prior Mediation  
Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many cases can you mediate during that week?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Will you be submitting cases for Settlement Week?**     Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

**MUST BE RETURNED BY February 28, 2020**

**SETTLEMENT WEEK SUBMISSION SHEET**

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SUBMITTING ATTORNEY. **Return this form to:** Amanda Vega, Mediation Coordinator, via email to [wilcomediation@wilco.org](mailto:wilcomediation@wilco.org). **YOU MUST PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS FOR ALL ATTORNEYS AND PRO SE PARTIES THAT REQUIRE NOTICE OF THE MEDIATION.** ALL parties will be notified of the mediation date/time via email.

**COURT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CAUSE NO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STYLE OF CASE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLF NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RESP NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLF ATTY NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RESP ATTY NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY & ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY & ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NO.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NO.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL (required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL (required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**(List names of ALL parties and/or attorneys, including Ad Litem/Amicus. Attach additional pages, if needed.)**

Please indicate at least three alternative times for the Mediation which are agreeable to ALL attorneys, parties and/or authorized representatives: **Mark 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices.**

<b>Monday, March 30, 2020</b>	<b>8:30 – 12:00</b> _____	<b>1:00 – 4:30</b>
<hr/>		
<b>Tuesday, March 31, 2020</b>	<b>8:30 – 12:00</b> _____	
<b>Wednesday, April 1, 2020</b>	<b>8:30 – 12:00</b> _____	
<b>Thursday, April 2, 2020</b>	<b>8:30 – 12:00</b> _____	
<b>Friday, April 3, 2020</b>	<b>8:30 – 12:00</b> _____	
<b>1:00 – 4:30</b>	_____	
<b>1:00 – 4:30</b>	_____	
<b>1:00 – 4:30</b>	_____	
<b>1:00 – 4:30</b>	_____	

#### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SETTLEMENT WEEK**

##### **WHAT IS SETTLEMENT WEEK?**

Twice a year, a week is set aside to facilitate the settlement of civil and family cases pending in the Williamson County Courts at Law and District Courts. It affords parties in lawsuits the opportunity to make a concentrated effort to settle their cases with the aid of volunteer, trained mediators.

##### **WHO ORGANIZES SETTLEMENT WEEK?**

The Williamson County Judiciary (County Courts at Law and District Courts) together with the Williamson County Bar Association. The point of contact is Mediation Coordinator, Mandy Vega.

##### **WHO DECIDES WHETHER A CASE IS MEDIATED?**

Any attorney representing a party in a case may submit a case for mediation mindful of the **new procedure** requiring both parties to confer on available times for mediation. Once a case is submitted, the judge will sign an order for the parties to appear at the mediation. **ALL PARTIES DO NOT HAVE TO AGREE IN ORDER FOR THE CASE TO BE SUBMITTED FOR MEDIATION. ANY OBJECTION TO MEDIATION SHOULD BE PROMPTLY MADE TO THE COURT** (that ordered the mediation); however, once a case is set for mediation during Settlement Week, the parties must appear for the mediation.

##### **WHY SHOULD I WANT MY CASE MEDIATED?**

You have greater control over the outcome of your case if you mediate. The mediator's job is not to issue a decision, but to help the parties come up with solutions agreeable to both sides. Often, you can achieve a better result by agreement than one that is imposed by a judge or jury. You may be able to achieve

a quicker resolution of your case and avoid the substantial cost of continued litigation.

#### **HOW MUCH DOES MEDIATION COST?**

There is no fee for the mediation during Settlement Week. The mediators donate their time and services. Your own attorney's fee will vary depending upon what your attorney charges for preparation and representation at the mediation.

#### **HOW LONG DOES MEDIATION LAST?**

There are morning mediations and afternoon mediations, each session is 3 ½ hours long. Space is limited, so it is extremely important to stay within your allotted time.

#### **CAN MEDIATION DURING SETTLEMENT WEEK BE CANCELLED OR RESCHEDULED?**

A case ordered to mediation can only be cancelled by the judge who ordered it. If a scheduling conflict occurs, you may be able to reschedule for an alternate day/time during Settlement Week if all parties agree, but space is very limited. Contact the Court that ordered the mediation if any issues arise regarding a scheduled mediation. The Court will contact the Mediation Coordinator.