

SOCIAL WORK AND MEDIATION

INTRODUCTION

The methodology of intervention includes mediation actions involving the various activities that are put into practice to resolve problems. Across Europe, mediation is a field of intervention for a large number of social professionals. Of particular note is the role of mediation as an intervention seeking to identify the sources of the conflict between clients and their surroundings, and to connect the client system with the social system in a more realistic manner, through intersection, persuasion and negotiation. This type of medication is used in the context of a global intervention in the problems within a specific system, acting from different perspectives and intervening in the different problems that arise therein. The leading professional institution in Spain (The General Board of Official Diploma Schools in Social Work and Social Care, or *Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales*), in a 2003 statement, defined mediation as a basic function for social workers: "social workers work toward the resolution of conflicts affecting families and social groups within their relations and with their social environment." At the same time, mediation is becoming part of one of the most specific spaces for our profession, that is, the social services of the Welfare State. Due to the increasing number of family breakups and separation, conflicts between adolescents and parents, intergenerational conflicts, new forms of family seeking recognition from society and a growing demand for social intervention aimed at changing communication patterns and conflict resolution in general, professional social workers need to have the basic competencies for mediation interventions.

Mediation in itself is an intervention strategy aimed at alternative dispute resolution in the different intervention contexts faced by social workers. It is one of the necessary achievement criteria in the acquisition of skills and abilities for the basic competencies to be developed in the training of social workers.

COMPETENCIES

- Use mediation as a social intervention strategy aimed at alternative resolution of conflicts.
- Acquire mediation intervention abilities aimed at peaceful management of conflicts.
- Be able to detect conflicts and imbalances that appear during childhood, adolescence, youth, young adulthood, adulthood and old age.
- Understand the resources available for resolving conflicts in the professional context.
- Know how to manage conflicts using the best available alternative for the parties.
- Be able to constructively manage interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts.
- Know the various environments in which mediation is applied.
- Carry out an individual mediation intervention project.

CONTENT

1. Why do social workers mediate? History of mediation in the context of social work.
2. Mediation and psychosocial intervention. Similarities and differences between social work and mediation.
3. Mediator profile of social workers.
4. Mediation skills and techniques.
5. Keys to mediation: history of the implementation of mediation. Legal significance of the application of mediation.
6. Ethics of mediation. Limits of mediation. Neutrality and impartiality of mediators.
7. Mediation as a communicative process: the mediation process in various fields.
8. Advantages of family mediation at different stages of the family lifecycle: construction of couples/parents, adolescence, the elderly, dependency.
9. Intervention protocol. Limits of mediation? Family and gender violence.
10. Social intervention and mediation: mediation in the different spheres of action of social work.



11. Mediation in schools. Education, diversity and coexistence. Schools as confluence and pivot for conflicts.
12. Mediation in health: disability and dependency.
13. Intercultural mediation.
14. Mediation in institutions. Institutions and institutional conflicts. Appreciative dialogues.