

## Mediate BC and 50 Organizations Sign Access to Justice Triple Aim

*A Historic Display of Unity in B.C.'s Justice Sector*

**June 12, 2019**

**VANCOUVER** – Mediate BC, along with fifty justice sector organizations, join the Attorney General and the Chief Justice of BC to endorse the *Access to Justice Triple Aim* in downtown Vancouver.

This joint endorsement, spearheaded by Access to Justice BC, provides a shared frame of reference and a common goal for initiatives across the province and has the potential to make a difference for everyone who needs to access the family or civil justice system to solve their legal problems.

The *Access to Justice Triple Aim* has three elements: improving access to justice on a population level, improving the experience of individuals with accessing justice, and improving costs.

"Mediation is a critical component of access to justice," said Ann Lee, Executive Director of Mediate BC. "Improving access is about having a range of options depending on what the people and their situations need. Mediation and med-arb are part of those options for British Columbians."

As more people turn to collaborative dispute resolution processes, like mediation, there will be an improvement of user experience and a decrease of costs in the overall system. Research has shown that over 90% of family lawyers who use collaboration or mediation agreed the results they achieved are in the client's interest, compared to only about one-third of lawyers using arbitration or litigation.<sup>1</sup> About 66% to 75% of family lawyers agreed that mediation is cost-effective, while 87.1% said litigation is not.<sup>2</sup> Similar statistics exist in the realm of civil law as well.

Since mediation and med-arb are two important parts of the suite of access to justice options, the role of Mediate BC is critical. Only by ensuring mediators are trained, experienced, and professional can quality be maintained in the province. "Mediation is largely an unregulated field," explains Lee. "Anyone can call themselves a mediator. That's why Mediate BC was formed, to protect and help the public."

Mediate BC is a not-for-profit organization—funded by the province of British Columbia and the Law Foundation of BC—that leads, promotes and facilitates effective conflict resolution; all with the goal of protecting and helping the public. This is done by managing rosters of more than 300 mediators, providing standards of conduct and a complaint process, and

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<sup>1</sup> Page 52. *An Evaluation of the Cost of Family Law Disputes*. Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family, December 2017. [http://www.criif.ca/Documents/Cost\\_of\\_Dispute\\_Resolution\\_-\\_Mar\\_2018.pdf](http://www.criif.ca/Documents/Cost_of_Dispute_Resolution_-_Mar_2018.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



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