

Background information on mediation of criminal cases in Finland

Mediation in criminal cases in Finland is free of charge and voluntary

In Finland, mediation in criminal cases is a free of charge service through which victim and suspect can meet through a neutral mediator. Victim-offender mediation involves dealing with the mental and physical damage caused to the victim and its aim is to find a compensatory solution satisfying both parties.

Victim-offender mediation is always voluntary and requires acceptance from both victim and suspect. No pressure may be exercised against the parties in order for them to accept mediation and, especially in cases of domestic violence, the voluntary aspect is emphasised. Both parties have the right to cancel their acceptance at any time and halt the mediation process. Mediation and processing by the police, prosecutor or court are not mutually exclusive.

An initiative for mediation can be made by the police, prosecutor, another authority, the suspect, victim or an injured party. For cases of domestic violence, only a police officer or prosecutor has the power to submit an initiative for mediation.

State Provincial Offices bear responsibility for organising mediation, by making an agreement with a service provider.

The local mediation office decides whether to accept an offence for a mediation procedure, while the police and prosecutor are under an obligation to give information on the opportunity for mediation in cases where a settlement is reasonable and possible. Victim-offender mediation is carried out by trained voluntary mediators.

If conciliation is attained through mediation, the mediator will draw up a written agreement. Mediation and achieving an agreement generally end in the prosecutor deciding not to prosecute, or lighter punishment by the court.

For further information, please contact:

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