

You have filed or you have been served with an action for child custody (or a motion to modify the current child custody order in Orange and Chatham County, North Carolina¹), and you know mediation is the next step, what now?

Mandatory Custody Mediation Process

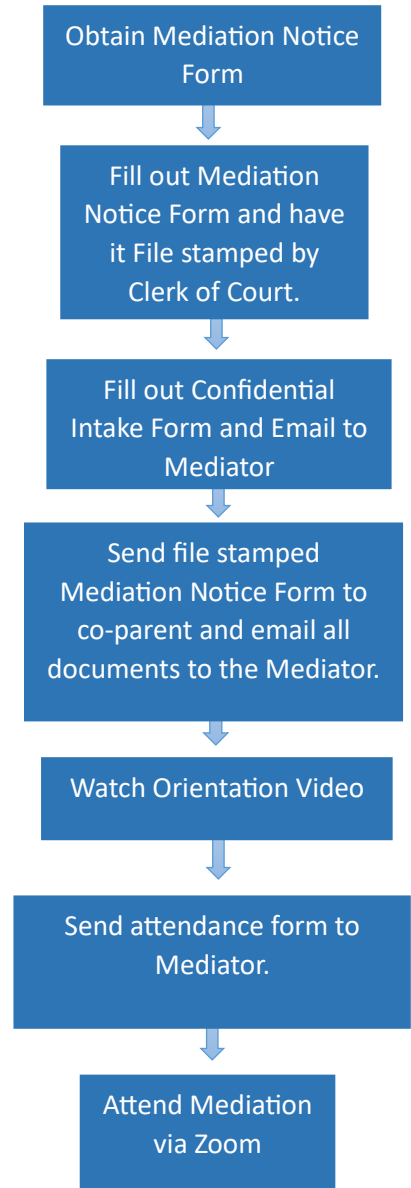
STEP 1: Mediation Notice

- First you will need a Mediation Notice Form. You can get the form from the Clerk of Court.
- Fill out the Mediation Notice Form. To fill out the Mediation Notice Form, you need the file case number. The file case number is located in the upper right-hand corner of the custody paperwork you filed or received from the court.
- Once you fill out the Mediation Notice Form, have the form stamped by the Clerk of Court.
- Now, fill out the Confidential Intake Form (Link: <https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/forms/a208>).
- Send the file stamped Mediation Notice Form to your co-parent by US mail.
- Email a copy of the Motion or Complaint for Custody, Confidential Intake Form, and Mediation Notice Form to the Custody Mediator: Kirsten.B.Atkinson@NCCOURTS.org

STEP 2: Orientation Video

- On the Mediation Notice Form, there is a link to an Orientation Video. Watch the online video.
- Confirm you have done so by forwarding the auto-generated attendance confirmation to the Mediator. Then, an email with the mediation date and time will be sent to you after both parents have watched the Orientation and turned in the Confidential Intake Form. You may need to check your spam folder for that email.

Once a mediation date and time has been communicated via Outlook, you will receive a Zoom link 5-15 minutes prior to the start of Mediation. Even if Mediation has been waived by the judge², you must watch the video and send confirmation to the Mediator that you have done so. You have 30 days from sending or receiving the Mediation Notice to watch the Orientation video.

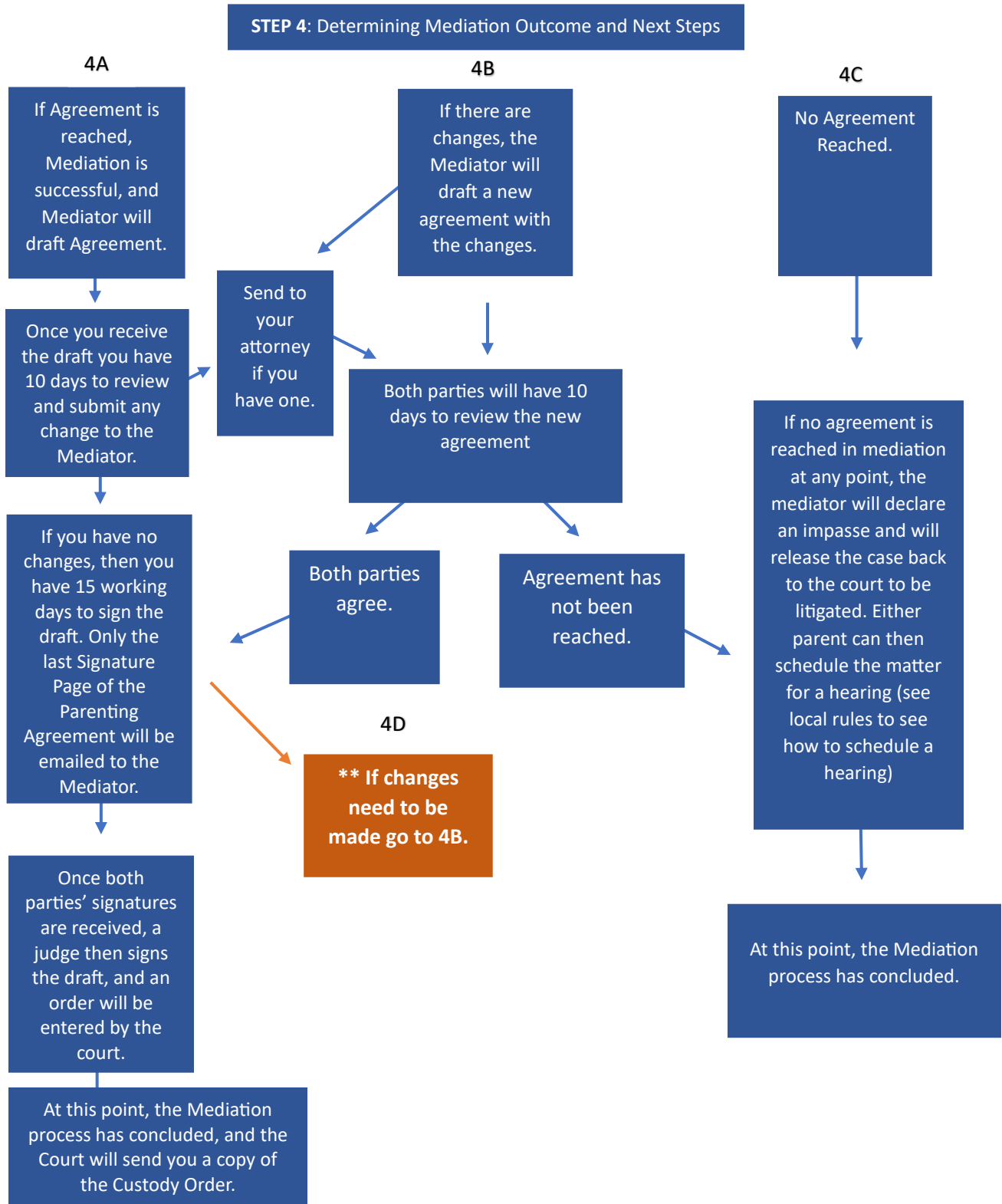


¹ Procedures in your jurisdiction will be different. This applies to Orange and Chatham County, NC only, as of June 2023.

² Link: [Motion and Order to Waive Custody Mediation Form](#)

STEP 3: Attend Mediation by Zoom

STEP 4: Determine Next Steps (see chart)



STEP 4D: If Changes Need to be Made

In general, changes can still be made to items negotiated in Mediation. If you receive the Parenting Agreement and would like to make some changes, follow these steps within 10 days:

- Do not sign or return your Signature Page.
- State the line number (if you do not see these, simply put the paragraph or section number of the draft).
- Make a note proposing how you believe the line should be rewritten.
- Email this suggestion (both section number and rewritten statement) to both the Mediator **AND** your co-parent.

Helpful Notes:

- Failure to do any of the above steps may result in delays.
- If either party chooses not to sign, does not agree to follow suggested changes, does not respond by the deadline (10 days), the Mediation will close, and the case will be released from Custody Mediation. **See 4C.**
- **Routinely check Spam/Junk folders. Emails for Mediators may end up here.**