

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
Pro Bono Prisoner Early Mediation Program**

The Western District of Michigan's (WDMI) *Pro se* Prisoner Civil Rights Early Mediation Program (PEM) provides early mediation conferences to assist the parties in settling *pro se* prisoner civil rights cases, brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, without the need for further court action. The WDMI is currently using its Voluntary Facilitative Mediation (VFM) panel mediators, as well as additional mediators selected and trained to handle mediations in prisoner civil rights cases. The program has been very successful, resolving more than 50% of the cases that have gone to mediation. **The Court is in need of additional trained mediators to maximize the benefits of the PEM.** Accordingly, the Court has asked the FBA's assistance in identifying and training additional PEM mediators. These additional mediators would be used solely for the PEM.

PEM mediations are conducted in half-day sessions by zoom on Wednesdays and Fridays. Mediators are free to conduct the mediation from the location of their choice. Through the use of "virtual rooms," the mediator meets jointly with all parties and/or separately and confidentially with each party and counsel to discuss the issues, with the goal of achieving settlement. As in other mediations, the documents exchanged between the parties and their discussions and negotiations during the mediation conference are strictly confidential. The parties to the litigation are required to make a good faith effort to settle the case based on a fair and reasonable view of the facts and the law.

Our FBA Chapter has a long history of stepping up when the Court needs assistance. Please consider whether, as part of your *pro bono* commitment, you would be willing to serve the Court and litigants through this important program. If so, please complete the application and return it by the deadline. For more information, please contact Magistrate Judge Phillip J. Green at (616) 456-2309.

To be considered for certification as a *pro bono* mediator for the WDMI PEM, an applicant must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- be an attorney with a minimum of **five years'** experience (federal and/or state), with preference given to those applicants whose principal practice is in the state and federal courts in the Western District of Michigan;
- be a member in good standing of this Court's bar;
- successfully complete four hours of training to be sponsored by the court on May 11, 2023, at the **Gerald R. Ford Federal Courthouse** in Grand Rapids (zoom option available); and
- agree to serve as a mediator in a ***pro bono*** capacity at least five times in a two-year period.

Submit attached application, along with any copies of certificates of completion of training, **no later than April 21, 2023**, to Melissa Rabidoux at Melissa.Rabidoux@fd.org

WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
Pro Bono Prisoner Early Mediation Program
Mediator Application and Certification

1. Name _____ P# _____
2. Firm/Business Address _____

3. Date admitted to practice in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan:

4. Are you admitted to practice in any other federal court? _____ If yes, please provide the name of the court and the date of your admission:

Name of court	Date of Admission

5. List any experience you have litigating §1983/Civil Rights cases.
6. List any facilitative mediation training you have successfully completed:

Session	Sponsor	Location	Dates	Hours

7. Have you ever served as a facilitative mediator? _____ If yes, approximately how many disputes/cases have you mediated?

Prior to the filing of a lawsuit _____
In federal court _____
In state court _____

I hereby certify that I agree to the conditions for service as a mediator in the Western District of Michigan, as set forth in the *Pro Se Prisoner Civil Rights Litigation – Early Mediation Program Protocol*.

Date: _____ (Signature)