



*Fostering a community in which family mediation
is the first choice for resolving family conflict.*

TRAINERS' PACKAGE

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3. Course Requirement Outline
4. Application
 - Part A:
 - Application for Approval of Family Mediation Course
 - Application Checklist
 - Part B:
 - Trainer's Checklist
5. Criteria for Accredited Family Mediators



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528 Victoria St. N. Kitchener, ON N2H 5G1 Tel: 519-585-1492 Fax: 519-585-0405

Date

Name

Address

City, Prov, Postal Code

Dear ,

RE: OAFM 60 HOUR FAMILY MEDIATION TRAINING COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I am writing to you, a recognized training provider in Family Mediation. As you are likely aware, in order to meet the minimum training criteria for OAFM Accredited Family Mediator designation (Acc. F.M.), mediators must show proof they have participated in 30 hours of Substantive Mediation Knowledge Training, 10 hours of Core Mediation Training, 20 hours of Skills Training and 14 hours Domestic Violence Education. The OAFM has recently developed standards for privately provided family mediation training courses. They have appointed a Course Approval Committee which, with the help of an assessment tool will determine whether a submitted training course meets the required standard for recognition as "OAFM approved". Although our primary assessment tool is designed to assess the 60 hour Family Mediation Course (Substantive Mediation Knowledge, Core Training and Skills Training), our Course Approval Committee will receive and assess shorter training courses as well. Once "OAFM approved", the hours of the course may be applied toward an OAFM member's Accredited Family Mediator designation (Acc.F.M.). We are also currently working on a tool to assess the Domestic Violence Courses.

Although the OAFM has not set an exact time frame, it is expected that, at some time in the future, only those training courses which are approved as having met these standards will be accepted as qualifying hours toward the Acc. F.M. designation.

I encourage you to consider carefully the benefits of obtaining OAFM approval for courses which you currently offer or are considering offering. As you will be aware, the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General has taken the Acc. F.M. designation as a standard of qualification for mediators providing services in its Unified Family Courts. The OAFM office receives several calls each week concerning the applicability of certain courses toward the Acc.F.M. Courses that have been approved may be advertised by trainers as "OAFM Approved". We will also publish regularly updated lists of approved courses in our newsletter, "Solutions", which is distributed to all members of OAFM in the province.

continued...

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I have included with this letter a package that contains instructions for submitting a course to the Course Approval Committee for consideration.

Materials should be submitted to ***Chair, Course Approval Committee***. Enclose a cheque or money order made payable to the ***Ontario Association for Family Mediation*** in the amount of the application fee of \$400.00. No application will be considered unless all required documents and the application fee are received.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Ryan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

David Ryan
OAFM President



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PROCEDURES REGARDING TRAINING COURSE APPROVAL

INITIAL COURSE APPROVAL

1. A course means a training session or training sessions which can stand alone and contents of which are devoted almost exclusively to the subject matter identified as required for Accredited Family Mediator (OAFM) designation-Acc. F.M. (OAFM).
2. Those who seek approval for their mediation training course or mediation skills training (henceforth referred to as “the course”) shall apply to the Course Approval Committee (henceforth referred to as the “CAC”).
3. Every applicant will be required to permit a qualified reviewer from OAFM to participate in the course should the CAC decide that such will assist in the assessment of the course. The reviewer will report to the CAC regarding the fulfillment of the criteria required for the approval sought.
4. The CAC shall consider the application and shall report to the applicants:
 - 4.1 Where the application is sufficient:
 - (a) that the training will be counted toward the requirements for the Accredited Family Mediator (OAFM) designation and will indicate that a specific number of hours will be counted in the specific categories set out in the criteria for Accredited Family Mediator (OAFM), where appropriate;
 - (b) that only the words “OAFM Approved Course” can be used by the approved applicants indicating OAFM approval to the public.
 - 4.2 Where the application is insufficient:
 - (a) return it to the applicant with a request that further material be submitted to OAFM within three (3) months, or
 - (b) reject the application.

5. All applicants must have a current valid Accredited Family Mediator (OAFM) designation.
6. All approved applicants shall provide a copy of the OAFM disclaimer notice outlining OAFM's approval limitations to each student enrolled in their course.
7. A fee will be charged by the OAFM for the review of:
 - 7.1 Training course approval applications;
 - 7.2 Re-approval, and
 - 7.3 Reviews or appeals of any such decisions.
8. Duration of Approval
 - 8.1 The approval granted for training courses will expire five years after it is given.
9. Course Re-approval
 - 9.1 The application fee for re-approval of a course shall be 50.00.
 - 9.2 A re-approval notice will be sent out to the applicant two months prior to end of an approval period and all re-approval packages must be submitted at least one month before the expiry date. If not received, it will be treated as a new approval at full fee.
 - 9.3 Any applicant may only obtain four approvals of a particular course. Then a new application for approval must be submitted by the applicant.
 - 9.4 Each re-approval must include:
 - i. proof of current accreditation for all named trainers;
 - ii. bios or resumes for all trainers and topic presenters;
 - iii. proof of mediator and trainer's insurance.
10. Evaluations
 - 10.1 New application: Applicants will provide evaluation forms with their course application to the CAC. The Evaluation form must cover the following criteria:
 - (a) The purpose and goals stated were met;
 - (b) The teaching and training corresponded with the course advertisement;

(c) The course material was appropriate and useful.

- 10.2 Re-Approval: Applicant will provide to the CAC completed evaluation forms used in the course for which re-approval is sought. The number of forms submitted should equal at least 50% of the total number of persons who have taken the course since it was approved (or last re-approval).

Applicants will advise the CAC of the number of persons who have taken the course since it was approved or re-approved.

11. Changes in course:

- 11.1 Any material changes or omissions in the course or changes to Principal Trainers/Coaches shall be reported by the applicant to the CAC at every renewal.
- 11.2 If a change to the course is made or a material omission is identified, the CAC reserves the right to require the applicant to address and bring to standard the course material.
- 11.3 The CAC may revoke OAFM approval if the applicant fails to comply with the request in paragraph 11.2 within three (3) months.
- 11.4 If, in the opinion of the CAC, the course is significantly different from the course previously approved, it will require the applicant to submit an application for approval as a new course.
- 11.5 The fee in the case of 11.4 shall be the same as for a new course approval.

12. Disputes:

- 12.1 If a dispute arises between the applicant and the CAC, the OAFM Executive Committee must be notified of the dispute by the CAC Chair and the Reviewer within thirty days of the dispute arising.

Each party to the dispute has a right to present its position to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will resolve the dispute, after hearing each party to the dispute, and its decision on the matter will be final.

- 12.2 If a dispute arises between a Reviewer and the CAC, the OAFM Executive Committee must be notified of the dispute by the CAC Chair within thirty days of the dispute arising. The Executive Committee will resolve the dispute, after hearing each party to the dispute, and its decision on the matter will be final.

- 12.3 In a dispute between an applicant and the CAC, if the parties agree to mediate the dispute, then they may mediate before the Executive Committee makes a decision.
 - 12.4 The full Board must be notified promptly of the nature of the dispute and the result.
- 13. Once a sufficient number of courses has been approved, the OAFM will accept only training that has been approved by the OAFM as compliant with the criteria set for the Accredited Family Mediator designation – Acc. F.M. (OAFM).

The OAFM will publish the names of approved course in Solutions.
- 14. No one may indicate OAFM approval of any training that has not followed the required policies and procedures. If a person falsely claims that his or her course is approved by the OAFM, the OAFM:
 - 14.1 Will advise the person of the false claim and require that such a claim be immediately withdrawn.
 - 14.2 Will notify its members through Solutions, or such other means as it deems acceptable, of any such course that is not OAFM approved.
 - 14.3 May take any other steps as determined by the Board as necessary.



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OUTLINE

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL: 60 HOUR FAMILY MEDIATION TRAINING PROGRAM

SECTION 1—SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE BASE (minimum 30 hours total)

- I. Nature of Conflict, Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution Theory and Principles: approaches to Dispute Resolution Eg. transactional, positional, and relational models of negotiation; transformative, positional, and interest-based models of mediation; open and closed mediation, family mediation, arbitration)
- II. Psychological Issues in Separation and Divorce Including Family Dynamics
- III. Issues and Needs of Children Resulting from Parents' Separation or Divorce
- IV. Family Mediation Process-A Model- Including Process and Techniques
- V. Family Law in Separation\Divorce (including custody, child support, spousal support, asset evaluation and distribution, taxation).
- VI. Power Imbalances

SECTION 2—CORE TRAINING (minimum 10 hours)

- VII. Information Gathering Skills and Knowledge
- VIII. Relationship Skills and Knowledge
- IX. Communication Skills and Knowledge
- X. Problem-solving Skills and Knowledge
- XI. Knowledge of Ethical Values and Ethical Decision-Making
- XII. Professional Skills and Knowledge

SECTION 3—MEDIATION SKILL TRAINING (20 hours)

Where trainers are submitting an application for approval for the full 60 hour course (Substantive Knowledge, Core Training and Skills Training), they should ensure the following:

- The role plays during the course are to increase in duration and complexity of substantive matters (including ethical issues, power imbalances, and impasses).
- The role plays must involve family conflicts. A broad definition of “family matters” is applied for this purpose. For example the role plays may deal with separation and divorce, parent/teen conflict, family business, intergenerational conflict, etc.
- There should be one role play which focuses on the mediator’s skill in conducting an individual intake screening interview and attentiveness to indications of power imbalances, or domestic violence.
- Each student must participate in a minimum of 2 short (half hour each) and 2 long (one hour each) coached role plays.
- Role plays may be offered in small group format of four or fewer OR large group format of four or more participants.
- Each trainer must not supervise/coach more than 1 short and 1 long role play. Supervisors/coaches must have current Acc. F.M. membership and must have experience mediating several cases.

PLEASE NOTE: As per the information contained in the Criteria for Accredited Family Mediation, the required 20 hours of skills training may be achieved by member’s attendance at one or more advanced trainings, relevant workshops and conferences.

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL OF A:

40 or 60 HOUR FAMILY MEDIATION TRAINING PROGRAM

OTHER

1. **Trainers should ensure that trainees are provided with the criteria for the Acc.F.M. (OAFM) designation, and provide information as to which criteria and related required hours the course content applies and has been approved.**
2. **OAFM membership is to be discussed and membership materials provided to all participants.**
3. **Each Program should have a set of specific learning objectives.**
4. **Training should include a balance of lecture, video, role play, small group exercises and discussion.**
5. **Trainers shall provide to each student, a copy of the OAFM disclaimer notice outlining OAFM’s approval limitations.**

6. **While supplementary reading by way of bibliography is encouraged and preparation at home is expected, this time shall not be counted toward the forty (40 or 60) hour requirement.**
7. **For each training day of six hours or more, a maximum of 30 break minutes may be counted toward the hour requirement. Lunch breaks shall not be included as training time.**
8. **Training manuals are required and should relate in specific terms to the learning objectives and agenda for the program. When submitting the three (3) required copies of the trainer's course manual, the trainer should remove any reference to the name of trainers or the location of training. The removal of names and location is intended to ensure evaluation of course material remains unbiased.**
9. **Evaluation forms must be provided to participants, collected and submitted to the OAFM Course Approval Committee for periodic review.**

NOTE: Please complete and submit the 40 hour Family Mediation Training Checklist if you wish to submit a training program for approval. If you would like the committee to review the additional 20 hours of Skills Training component, please elaborate where the hours are located in your material.



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**APPLICATION for APPROVAL of FAMILY MEDIATION COURSE
Part A**

Name of Applicant: Individual\Organization\Institution: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Fax:** _____

Email Address: _____

Principal Trainer: _____

Associate Trainer(s): _____
(if applicable)

Topic Presenter (s): _____
(if applicable)

Course Title: _____

Course Length: _____ **days**

_____ **hours**



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OAFM MEDIATION COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

This process is intended to permit appraisal of courses of 60 hours, 40 hours, or less. For example, a two day, 14 hour Introduction to Mediation course might cover material in Section I—Nature of Conflict...(5 hours), Section VII—Information Gathering...(2hours), Section VIII—Relationship Skills...(3 hours), Section IX—Communication Skills...(3 hours).

A nine day course of 60 hours may cover Substantive and Core training modules in 40 hours and include 20 hours of mediation skills training.

The following is a list of the information required when submitting your Course Approval Request Package to OAFM:

REQUIRED INFORMATION WHEN SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION	INCLUDED (√)
OAFM Application for Approval of Family Mediation Course, Part A	
Trainer’s Checklist, (Application Part B)	
Course Outline	
Three copies of the Course Manual and Trainer’s Guide (if you use one)— <i>Please remove any identifiable reference to the name of trainers or location of training.</i>	
Copies of role play scenarios typically used	
List of handouts and reading materials, if not included in the Manual	
Copy of proposed evaluation used by trainer	
Verification of trainer’s Acc. F.M. (OAFM) current designation	
Curriculum vitae and/or bios and three references for each trainer forming the training team	
Curriculum vitae and/or bio for any coaches or topic presenters used, if different than trainers	

Once we have all the required materials, they will be reviewed by a team of OAFM reviewers. You may refer to the enclosed Policy and Procedure for a full explanation of the approval process.



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**40 HOUR FAMILY MEDIATION TRAINING PROGRAM
TRAINER'S CHECKLIST**

SECTION 1--SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE BASE (minimum 30 hours total)

I. Nature of Conflict, Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution Theory and Principles: approaches to Dispute Resolution Eg. transactional, positional, and relational models of negotiation; transformative, positional, and interest-based models of mediation; open and closed mediation, family mediation, arbitration

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

II. Psychological Issues in Separation and Divorce Including Family Dynamics

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

III. Issues and Needs of Children Resulting from Parents' Separation or Divorce

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

IV. Family Mediation Process-A Model- Including Process and Techniques

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

V. Family Law in Separation\Divorce (including custody, child support, spousal support, asset evaluation and distribution, taxation).

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

VI. Power Imbalances

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

SECTION 2—CORE TRAINING (minimum 10 hours)

VII. Information Gathering Skills and Knowledge

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics:

- 1. Process Issues:**
 - a. Intake Procedures
 - b. Screening for Appropriateness and Readiness
 - c. Contracting for Service
 - d. Preparing Pre-mediation Plan
 - e. Opening Statement
 - f. Setting the Agenda and Priorizing issues
 - g. Exploring Client Interests and Concerns
 - h. Recording and Retaining Data
 - i. Dealing with Complex Factual Materials
- 2. Counsel and Other Experts**
 - a. Role of Counsel in DR Process
 - b. Involving Experts in Clarifying Data Issues
 - c. Role of Community Resources
- 3. Mediator's Skills**
 - a. Attend
 - b. Allow, encourage
 - c. Confront
 - d. Challenge
 - e. Refocus
 - f. Respond
 - g. Question
 - h. Probe
 - i. Reframe
 - j. Amplify
 - k. Paraphrase
 - l. Check in
 - m. Reflect
 - n. Summarize

VIII. Relationship Skills and Knowledge

- Location in agenda _____

Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics

1. Establishing Neutrality and Impartiality
2. Sharing Mediator's Bias
3. Forming Relationships and Building Rapport
4. Establishing Trust
5. Setting a Cooperative Tone
6. Active Listening and Questioning
7. Comfort with Giving Lead/Control to Clients
8. Empowering Opportunities for Recognition
9. Remaining Non-judgmental

IX. Communication Skills and Knowledge

- Location in agenda _____

Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics:

1. Identifying areas of Consensus and Disagreement
2. Paraphrasing
3. Confronting
4. Attending
5. Reframing
6. Clarifying
7. Questioning
8. Pre-empting
9. Probing
10. Refocusing
11. Summarizing
12. Balancing Communication
13. Brainstorming
14. Respectful Behavior
15. Assertiveness Skills

X. Problem-solving Skills and Knowledge

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics Include:

1. Identifying and Analyzing Problems and Needs
2. Letting Clients Take Lead; Following
3. Determining Needs- Converting Positions into Interests
4. Framing and Narrowing Issues
5. Identify Opportunities for Empowerment, Recognition Between Clients
6. Resisting Impulse to Problem-solve
7. Enact Supportive Response
8. Identifying Principles and Criteria to Assist in Decision Making
9. Designing and Testing Plans and Arrangements
10. Developing and Evaluating Options or Alternatives
11. Brainstorming
12. Dealing with Impasses
13. Reality Testing
14. Questioning
15. Balancing Bargaining Power
16. Generating an Agenda

XI. Knowledge of Ethical Values and Ethical Decision-Making

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics Include:

1. OAFM Standards of Practice
2. Role of Personal and Professional Opinions and Values
3. Voluntary Participation and Agreements
4. Parties' Values and Culture and Multicultural Issues
5. The Right of Self-determination
6. Appropriate Behavior Between Parties
7. Each Party's Ability to Negotiate and Advocate on Behalf of Self
8. Commitment to Honest Disclosure
9. Confidentiality
10. Rights and Responsibilities of Parties not Present (Such as Children)
11. Ethical Dilemmas
12. Balancing Power Imbalances
13. Caucusing- When and How
14. Multi-type Relationships, e.g. gay\lesbian
15. Gender Issues
16. Transformative Practitioner
17. Non-judgmental Practitioner

XII. Professional Skills and Knowledge

- Location in agenda _____
Manual Page # or Section Headings _____

- Learning Objectives _____

- Total time allocation _____ hours

Some Suggested Topics:

1. Drafting Family Mediated Documents: Parenting Plans, Financial Plans, Memorandum of Understanding versus Separation Agreement, etc.
2. Legal Status and Enforceability of Mediated documents
3. Working with Experts Effectively
4. Case Management
5. When to Refer Cases
6. Know Community Services and Resources: e.g. Psychological, Legal, Financial
7. Setting up a Practice

SECTION 3--MEDIATION SKILLS TRAINING (20 hours)

Please attach role play scenarios, indicate in your agenda when each is introduced and describe how each is incorporated into your training (e.g. demo, small or large group participatory activity, coached activity, short or long activity). Include biographies of each supervisor\coach.

SECTION 4—TRAINING MANUALS

All material excerpted or copied from copyrighted materials or from someone else's materials must be properly acknowledged and permission obtained.

XIII. Manual must include:

1. Table of Contents
2. The Mediation Process
3. Definition of negotiation, mediation, family mediation, arbitration
4. OAFM code of Ethics and Criteria for Accredited Family Mediators
5. Current bibliography
6. Biography or Curriculum Vitae of trainer(s) and coaches

XIV. OAFM recommends that the following be included:

7. Sample of Agreement to Mediate
8. Sample of Memorandum of Understanding or other Memoranda
9. Information about liability insurance
10. Sample forms for practice

SECTION 5—TRAINERS

All named trainers must have an Accredited Family Mediator (OAFM) designation. Topic presenters and coaches need not meet the AccFM designation but must provide a copy of their bio or resume for review by the CAC.

Acc. FM - Criteria for Accredited Family Mediators

A. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

1. The development of Standards, the operational context within which the Code of Professional Conduct (Ethics) should function in practice, is a complex and difficult matter.
2. The OAFM is acutely aware of the ultimate need to certify competence in mediation practice in order to maintain the integrity of the process. However, due to the variety and divergent backgrounds of its practitioners, the unevenness in quality and availability of training, and the very recent emergence of mediation as a distinct profession, we believe that it would be premature to attempt to evaluate the competence of Accredited Family Mediators at this time.
3. Experience and outcome research will eventually provide the best information as to what constitutes high quality in mediation practice. At that point a certification process will be more appropriate.
4. OAFM does, however, have minimum standards of practice including education, training, supervision and experience.

B. AREAS OF COMPETENCE

In order to qualify for and maintain membership in the OAFM as an "Accredited Family Mediator" an applicant member must satisfy the Association that he or she possesses the qualifications set out below, and provide proof of:

1. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION:

Applicants must provide proof of a university degree or proof of having attained FMC certification.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY MEDIATION THEORY AND SKILLS:

A basic knowledge of family mediation theory and skills is essential. For the purpose of application for membership, or continuing membership, an applicant/member must have completed:

A) Sixty (60) hours of family mediation education including a 40 hour family mediation training course and 20 hours of family mediation skills training. The 40 hour family mediation training course must be taught by an OAFM accredited mediator or approved by the OAFM, FMC or equivalent. The family mediation training course must include a minimum of five hours in each of the following categories:

- (i) Conflict resolution theories;
- (ii) Psychological issues in separation, divorce, family dynamics, and power imbalances;
- (iii) Issues and needs of children in separation and divorce;
- (iv) Mediation process and techniques including role play;
- (v) Family Law including custody, support, asset evaluation and distribution, taxation as it relates to separation and divorce; and
- (vi) Family economics (not required if the basic training is limited to custody mediation).

The additional 20 hours can be achieved by attendance at one or more advanced trainings, relevant workshops and conferences.

AND,

(B) A minimum of 14 hours on domestic violence education.

OR

C) Taught such courses him/herself, and

D) Had an exceptional amount of applicable personal experience and in-service training.

NOTE: If the applicant lacks the minimum qualifications outlined in 1 and 2 above, he/she shall submit a resume and contact the Accreditation Committee to discuss his/her acceptability for membership on an individual basis.

3. EXPERIENCE AND CONSULTATION/ SUPERVISION IN THE ACTUAL PRACTICE OF MEDIATION:

An OAFM Accredited Family Mediator must:

A) Applicants who possess a law degree or a graduate degree must provide proof (ie. letter from supervisor, peer references) of a minimum two years of relevant experience in human service. Applicants who do not have a law degree or a graduate degree must provide proof of a minimum of six years of relevant work experience in human service;

B) SUBMIT a minimum of five family related cases mediated to the point of agreement. The mediator should consult with or be supervised by an OAFM Accredited Family Mediator for a minimum of one hundred hours including five cases mediated to point of agreement. The consultation could include: co-mediation; supervision; and peer consultation. The applicant must submit letter(s) from Acc.F.M. (O.A.F.M.) mediator(s) confirming co-mediation, supervision, and/or peer consultation of required one hundred (100) hours including five (5) cases mediated to point of agreement; and,

C) SUBMIT the 5 contracts to mediate which indicate the working relationship with the clients for the cases in (B) above.

4. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE:

A) Code of Professional Conduct (Ethics)

An Accredited Family Mediator must commit himself/herself and adhere strictly to the OAFM Code of Professional Conduct as a Standard of Practice. No mediator shall venture into an area of practice beyond his/her own area of expertise.

B) Continuing Education

An OAFM Accredited Family Mediator must continue and submit proof of his/her mediation education through attending courses and workshops and reading about new developments in the field. Continuing education must be a minimum of 10 hours of course-work relating to the practice of family mediation every year,

C) Liability Insurance

All candidates at the time of application for the status of Accredited Family Mediator, as well as Accredited Family Mediators at the time of annual renewal, must provide proof of current liability insurance covering the practice of mediation in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.