



FY2026 Special Grant Conditions for Community Mediation Performance Funding

In addition to the conditions specified in the Judiciary's General Grant Conditions, the following conditions apply to all MACRO Community Mediation Performance Grants (FO-2026-MACRO-007).

1. PURPOSE

Community mediation is an important resource for the court, providing vital conflict resolution services to the District and Circuit Courts and at the neighborhood level, preventing violence and addressing the underlying causes of conflict in a manner that cannot be achieved in a courtroom. MACRO's goal in funding community mediation is to make mediation and conflict resolution services accessible and affordable to everyone in Maryland. MACRO's community mediation performance grant program is designed to ensure the achievement of that goal.

2. ELIGIBILITY

MACRO supports non-profit 501(c)3, higher education, and local government-based community mediation centers in the state of Maryland that meet the Ten Point Model of Community Mediation outlined below. MACRO views these Points as the definition of good community mediation and therefore requires centers to meet and continually improve their operations on each of the points to be eligible for funding under this program.

MACRO also supports community mediation centers that have diverse financial support. Except for Start-up centers and first-year Level 1 centers, centers must have raised a certain amount of funds to be eligible for funding under this grant program. (See Appendix A for specific amounts.)

2.1 Invitation Only

Funding under this grant program is provided on an invitation only basis. MACRO distributes invitations to community mediation centers each winter for funding in the following fiscal year. Entities wishing to establish a new center MUST contact MACRO first to receive an invitation.

2.2 The Ten Point Model of Community Mediation in Maryland

1. **Train community members - who reflect the community's diversity with regard to age, race, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, income, education, religion, life experience, and geographic location - to serve as volunteer mediators.**

A center reflects the community it serves by mirroring the diversity of the community in the diversity of the center's staff and volunteers. This approach creates stronger community support, a sense of ownership with the community at large and with the individuals who go through the mediation process. Additionally, having mediators who represent a range of experiences and perspectives ensures that these perspectives are included in training discussions, policy development, and program growth.

2. **Provide mediation and conflict resolution services at no cost or on a sliding scale.**
High quality community mediation and conflict resolution services should be accessible to anyone who needs them regardless of ability to pay.
3. **Hold mediations in neighborhoods/communities where disputes occur.**
Site location can be a critical element in how a center is perceived by the community it serves. The location of the mediation sends a message to participants and potential participants that a center's services are part of the community. Mediation sites should be located in areas that are visible, easily accessible, perceived by participants as neutral, and reflect a sense of empowerment. In addition, centers should have enough sites to ensure proximity to all residents in the service area for the sake of convenience and to reinforce a sense of connection and accessibility.
4. **Schedule mediations at a time and place convenient to the participants.**
Community mediation services should be available for as broad a range of times as is possible to ensure accessibility for participants.
5. **Encourage early use of mediation to prevent violence or to reduce the need for court intervention, as well as provide mediation at any stage in a dispute.**
Conflicts evolve and change along with the people who experience them. Some escalate very rapidly, some simmer for a long time, and still others seemingly move up and down the escalation ladder multiple times. Providing quality conflict resolution services to people experiencing conflict at any of these, or other stages of conflict, requires centers to apply skill and nuance to all areas of its work. Whether engaging the public through outreach, developing and maintaining referral partnerships, conducting intake, or working to maintain a roster of highly skilled mediators, centers must be able to both communicate and demonstrate the ability to meet people where they are.
6. **Mediate community-based disputes that come from diverse referral sources, such as community organizations, police, faith-based institutions, courts, community members, government agencies, and the center's outreach activities.**
Since people involved in a conflict may seek help from any number of organizations or agencies, it is important that centers have relationships with a diverse set of referral sources. By increasing the number and types of referral sources, centers will increase the use of mediation and reinforce the message that community mediation is connected to all parts of the community.
7. **Educate community members about mediation and conflict resolution.**
Direct grassroots outreach to individuals is an important part of building a connection with the community you serve. Each interaction with a person exposes them to the idea that they can create their own solutions by participating in mediation; they can help others to resolve conflicts by becoming a mediator; they can be a bridge for others to reach mediation by becoming a referral source; they can be a community leader by serving on the center's board; they can help support this work by making a donation; etc. Outreach also serves as an opportunity to educate the community about using conflict resolution skills that encourage collaboration and dialogue even when conflicts don't end up in mediation.

8. **Maintain high quality mediators by providing intensive, skills-based training, apprenticeships, continuing education, and ongoing evaluation of volunteer mediators.**
Centers can and should encourage all mediators to continuously stretch and improve their mediation skills. Centers should screen potential volunteers before offering mediation training in exchange for a volunteer service commitment. Centers should ensure that all mediators have had a minimum of 40 hours of basic mediation skills training. An apprenticeship process should be in place, and each mediator should be evaluated periodically. Continuing education of at least 5 hours per year should also be given at no cost to mediators.

9. **Work with the community in governing community mediation programs in a manner that is based on collaborative problem solving among staff, volunteers, and community members.**
Strong community mediation centers are those that have the solid support of the communities they serve. Active participation of community members in operating and governing decisions of the center is essential.

10. **Provide conflict resolution services to community members who reflect the community's diversity with regard to age, race, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, income, education, religion, life experience, and geographic location.**
People in conflict can be found in all segments of society. Strong community mediation centers meet the needs of their whole community by providing service to all segments of the community's population.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE FUNDING MODEL

MACRO's funding model for community mediation contains three parts. Part I addresses how the center is meeting the 10-point model of community mediation. Part II contains seven performance levels with the aim of encouraging centers to work toward continually increasing the conflict resolution services provided to their communities. Part III requires centers to raise additional funds corresponding to their performance level to ensure that centers have a diverse funding base.

Funding under this grant program provides community mediation centers with general operating support to assist them in meeting the ten-point model of community mediation. While centers are asked to submit a statement of their current fiscal year revenue and expenditures and a projected budget for the forthcoming fiscal year, Community Mediation Performance Grant awards are not determined on a financial need basis. Applications are instead evaluated on a center's operations within the 10-point model, their direct service performance (intakes, mediations, or others conflict resolution sessions), and the amount of funds they have raised. The combined review of these factors will determine whether a center is 1) a community mediation center operating within the 10-point model and therefore eligible for funding under this grant program; and 2) what level of performance funding the center is eligible to receive.

4. DETERMINATION OF PERFORMANCE LEVEL

MACRO funds community mediation centers at seven performance levels. Each performance level is worth a pre-determined dollar amount. See appendix A for specific performance funding levels. A center's performance level is determined by the number of intakes and conflict resolution sessions conducted by the center during the immediate past 12-month performance cycle (January 1 to December 31). Only data from cases that closed during this period can be counted. Data from cases

that remain open on January 1 will count toward the next year. A center's total performance point score, combined with the amount of income from other sources it has received (see Section 5 below), is what determines the center's final performance level.

4.1 Performance Definitions and Point Values

Intake – An intake contact is defined as each person in a conflict with whom your center has a private conversation in advance of the session, with the specific intent of bringing the person into a mediation or conflict resolution session. Centers may not count intakes for Day-of-Trial sessions from either the District or Circuit Courts. Letters, conversations at outreach events, and general calls for information do not count as intakes.

- **Each intake counts as 1 point.**

Mediation or Multi-party Conflict Resolution Session – A mediation or multi-party conflict resolution session, such as a large group facilitation, is defined as a gathering of two or more individuals involved in a specific conflict, who meet with one or more neutrals, either in-person or through a remote platform, to address their conflict. Sessions may only be counted if participants appear, and the session begins.

- **Each mediation or multi-party conflict resolution session is worth 3 points. ***

Conflict Coaching Session – A conflict coaching session is defined as a single participant meeting with one or more neutrals with the aim of assisting the participant with managing or resolving a specific conflict. Conflict Coaching sessions may only be counted if an agreement to participate is signed by the participant.

- **Each conflict coaching session is worth 2 points. ***

****Important: 60% or more of a center's performance points must come from intakes and mediation sessions. Points for conflict coaching and multi-party conflict resolution sessions will be capped at 20% (each) of a center's total points earned.***

5. ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INCOME REQUIREMENT

Updated language

All applicants, except for Start-Up/first-year Level 1 centers, must have additional income sources other than Maryland Judiciary funding to be eligible to receive funding under MACRO's Community Mediation Performance Grant program. Each performance level has a specified income requirement amount that corresponds to that level. (See Appendix A for the specific amounts.)

Centers must demonstrate that they have received the required amount within the immediate past 12- month performance year – January 1 to December 31. Center's that have not received the corresponding income amount that is required for their performance level will be funded at the performance level that is consistent with the amount of income they have received. For example, a center that has raised \$15,000 would be considered a Level 2 center, even if their performance score would place the center at Level 3 or higher. *In extraordinary circumstances, MACRO may wave this requirement.*

5.1 Sources for Additional Income

A center's additional income can come from fundraising activities, grants, donations, fee-based services, contributions from government agencies, or other sources. In-kind contributions cannot be used to meet the requirement. Funds that originate from the Maryland Judiciary, directly or indirectly, may not be counted toward the additional income requirement. All reported income

must have been received for the purpose of supporting the center’s community-based mediation and conflict resolution activities. Restricted grants and gifts can be counted, provided that the funds are consistent with this purpose. Funds from or for a parent organization or agency may only be counted if those funds were/will be used to support community mediation activities.

6. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF FUNDS

MACRO’s Community Mediation Performance grants are intended solely to provide general operating support to assist centers in providing community-based mediation and conflict resolution services according to the ten-point model of community mediation. Grant funds are unrestricted within that purpose, with the following exceptions: grant funds may not be used to purchase alcohol, or for any religious, political, or lobbying activities.

6.1 Budget Amendments

Since Community Mediation Performance Grants are general operating funds, grantees are allowed to move funds between line items and categories, however, programs will need to contact MACRO to update their award budget. Centers may not use performance funds for activities that are not within the 10-point model, nor may they submit a change of purpose request to use the funds for another purpose.

7. APPLICATIONS FROM NEW/ START-UP CENTERS

MACRO generally will only fund one organization per designated geographic region. Entities wishing to establish a new community mediation center should contact MACRO to discuss the region they want to serve and review the 10-Point Model of Community Mediation. If appropriate, MACRO will provide new entities with an invitation to apply. Priority will be given to service areas that have no existing community mediation programs at the time of application.

8. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All MACRO grantees are required to submit quarterly reports. For all MACRO Community Mediation Performance grants, these reports include:

- Achievements toward Performance Plan Goals
- Performance Data Summary
- Participant Evaluation Summary
- Financial report
- Payment Request

All reports must be submitted to MACRO by the due dates listed below. MACRO will not release any grant disbursements to grantees if the required reporting elements have not been received or completed to MACRO’s satisfaction. Please note: The quarterly report must be submitted even if no funds have been spent in a quarter.

| Reporting Due Dates: | <u>Reporting Period</u> | <u>Due Date</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| | July - September | October 31, 2025 |
| | October- December | January 31, 2026 |
| | January - March | April 30, 2026 |
| | April - June | July 30, 2026 |

9. GRANT PAYMENTS

Grant funds are disbursed on a quarterly reimbursement basis. MACRO will reimburse grantees for the exact amount that has been spent each quarter. To receive each payment grantees must submit a quarterly report (see above) as well as the appropriate quarterly invoice. ⁺ At least 10% of the award amount must be left to pay with the fourth quarter report. *MACRO may adjust a grantee's reimbursement to ensure that at least 10% of the award remains to be paid after the final report is submitted.*

9.1 Alternate Disbursement Option

Nonprofit grantees for which straight reimbursement will incur a financial hardship may request to receive 25% of their grant award (or \$100,000, whichever is lower) at the start of the grant. To request this, grantees must submit an Alternate Disbursement Request Form. If approved, grantees may submit the first payment request on July 14 or any time after that within the first 60 days of the grant period. All remaining payments associated with the quarterly expenditures will be made on a reimbursement basis. ****Grantees who use this option will have each of their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd quarter reimbursement payments reduced by 1/3 of the advance payment amount.*** This option is not available to government agencies or institutions of higher education.

9.2 Spending Funds During the Grant Period

All MACRO grant funds must be spent or obligated during the grant period. Grant funds may not be requested or spent on activities or expenses that occur prior to the start of the official grant period, nor may they be requested or spent on activities that occur after the end of the grant period. See section 9.2.1 for the limited exception to this rule. The official grant period dates can be found on the executed Grant Award and Acceptance Form. Grant funds are considered spent when payments for goods/services/salaries have been completed. Grant funds are considered obligated if the grantee has purchased goods/services/staff time on or before June 30 but have not yet paid the invoice/staff paycheck. **Grant period extensions will not be granted. Grantees will only be reimbursed for funds they have spent or obligated prior to the end of the grant period.**

Please be aware that MACRO will monitor your financial reports throughout the grant period and may delay grant payments or reduce the amount of your total grant award if expenditures are significantly delayed or below budgeted levels.

9.2.1 Expenses Related to Registering for Trainings or Events

For trainings or events that will take place during the first quarter after the close of the grant period, it is permissible for grantees to use current year grant funds to pay for staff registration fees and travel reservations, provided that such expenses were approved as part of the program's grant budget. For example, grant funds from FY2026 may be used to register a staff member to attend a training that is scheduled to take place during the first quarter of FY2027.

9.2 Fourth Quarter Estimate

All grantees are required to submit a fourth quarter projection that estimates as accurately as possible how much they anticipate spending by June 30, and any amount that will be remaining. This report is used by the Judiciary to accrue the final grant payment. **It is very important that grantees provide an accurate estimate, as any amount that is not included in the projection may not be able to be reimbursed.**

10. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

Grantees are required to collect demographic and case-related information.

- **Case Information:** Centers are required to use the case management software provided by MACRO. Centers will use Insightly to collect, manage, and report on their case and client-related data. MACRO will provide this software and any related updates to centers through Community Mediation Maryland. Centers are required to ensure that they have adequate computers and internet connections to operate the software. Centers must use Insightly to submit summary reports of their case data to MACRO on a quarterly basis. Any change to the requirement to use this software will be provided in writing.
- **Demographic Data:** Centers are required to collect and report on demographic data for clients, mediators, staff, and board members – including age, gender, race, education level, and household income. Centers may use either the Insightly case management system or some other program to collect and tabulate this data. Centers are required to report this data on an annual basis using the Excel demographics summary report provided by MACRO.

11. COURT REFERRED CASES

Since MACRO's funding comes from the court system, any cases referred to a community mediation center from a court (circuit or district) **must** be mediated at no cost to the participants.

12. FUNDING AVAILABILITY, LACK OF PERFORMANCE, and NON-COMPLIANCE WITH TERMS

MACRO is committed to supporting community mediation centers in Maryland, subject to funding availability. MACRO's grant funds are state general funds approved by the legislature as part of the Judiciary's budget to support conflict resolution in several areas. Availability of grant funding is dependent on the state budget process among other factors. MACRO reserves the right to withhold, reduce or cancel a grant award based on the availability of funding, lack of performance, or for non-compliance with the Judiciary's General Grant Conditions or the Special Grant Conditions for Community Mediation Performance Funding.

13. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MACRO SUPPORT

Grantees should include the following acknowledgment on published materials or products (paper or electronic) paid for with MACRO grant funds: "Produced with support from the Maryland Judiciary Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office." This is not a requirement where MACRO funds are only one source of support among many, or where MACRO funds only indirectly support the materials or products.

14. CONTACT INFORMATION

If at any time before, during or after your grant period, you have questions about your grantor the terms contained in the General Grant Conditions or these Special Grant Conditions, please contact MACRO.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Calculating Performance Grant Awards – FY2026

| Performance Level | Point Range | Part I Base Funding | Part II Performance Funds | Total Potential Grant | <u>FY25 Other Income Requirements</u> |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Start-Up Center / Level 1 Center | None for 1 st year 1 - 200 | \$20,000 | \$30,000 | <u>\$50,000</u> | None for 1 st year; \$2,500 for 2 nd year; \$5,000 for 3 rd year+ |
| Level 2 Center | 201 - 600 | \$20,000 | \$38,000 | <u>\$58,000</u> | \$9,000 |
| Level 3 Center | 601 - 1200 | \$20,000 | \$59,000 | <u>\$79,000</u> | \$17,000 |
| Level 4 Center | 1201 - 2400 | \$20,000 | \$80,000 | <u>100,000</u> | \$27,000 |
| Level 5 Center | 2401 - 3750 | \$20,000 | \$107,000 | <u>\$127,000</u> | \$42,500 |
| Level 6 Center | 3751 - 5150 | \$20,000 | \$133,000 | <u>\$153,000</u> | \$65,000 |
| Level 7 Center | 5151+ | \$20,000 | \$160,000 | <u>\$180,000</u> | \$75,000 |
| <i>MACRO reserves the right to modify the performance award amounts based on availability of funding.</i> | | | | | |

Appendix B: Community Mediation Referral Categories

Circuit Court - Civil: Any referral made from circuit court civil personnel.

Circuit Court – Family: Any referral made from circuit court family personnel.

Circuit Court – Day of Court: Any referral made from a circuit court during a scheduling hearing or other event at the court.

Circuit Court – Pre-Filing: Any referral made by circuit court personnel before a case is filed.

Community Member: Referrals from anyone who may have informed the participant about mediation who does not fall into the other categories. This may include a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, etc.

Community Organization: Referrals from a geographically based group such as a neighborhood association or homeowners' association, or from other community-based organizations, such as faith-based institutions.

Correctional Facility: Any referrals from a prison or detention facility.

Court Self-Help Center: Any referrals made by Self-Help Center staff or volunteers.

District Court Pre-Filing: Any referrals made by District Court personnel before a case is filed.

District Court Pre-Trial: Any referrals made by the District Court after a case has been filed, but before the trial.

District Court Day of Trial: Any mediations or ADR conducted for the District Court on the day of the trial. *{No intakes are counted for these cases.}*

District Court Post-Trial: Any referrals made by the District Court after a trial has been held.

Former Participant: Referrals from anyone who used the services in the past who is using them again, or if the participant calling was informed about the services by someone who used them in the past.

Government Agency: Any referrals from a governmental agency other than police, courts, schools. This would include Department of Social Services, Parks and Planning, Animal Control, etc.

MHIC: All referrals from the Maryland Home Improvement Commission.

Non-profit Organization: Any referrals from a nonprofit organization. These might include LegalAid, YWCA, a family center, etc.

Outreach/Publicity: Any referrals that resulted from an outreach activity.

Police: Any referral from the police.

Private Practitioner: Any referrals from a private practice mediator.

Schools: Any referral from school administration, teachers, etc.

Self (Phone Inquiry): Any referrals where the clients found the center through phone listing.

Self (Web Inquiry): Any referrals where the clients found the center through its website, or through an internet search.

State's Attorney's Office: Includes referrals from State's Attorneys made before the trial.