



April 29, 2025

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to funding for services in domestic relations cases.**

Clackamas County supports HB 97A, which allows counties to improve access to essential mediation services for their communities.

Clackamas County Resolution Services provides vital domestic relations mediation services for families navigating divorce, offering critical support when it is most needed, especially for low-income families. Mediation provides short- and long-term benefits to children and families, reducing co-parenting conflict, which is a factor associated with adverse childhood experiences.

Currently, there is a funding gap to provide these statutorily required services. SB 97A will provide the OJD with critical information to address this gap and allow counties to increase the maximum fee authorized under ORS 107.615 by up to \$35. This fee was first enacted in 1977 and has never been increased. If adjusted for inflation, it would be approximately \$54 today. This tool will enable counties to determine the appropriate funding level in their communities and work closely with courts to provide needed mediation services that are increasing in demand.

In 2023, 86% of family law cases had at least one self-represented party at final judgment. Mediation provides parents with an accessible out-of-court pathway to resolve their disputes and work with a facilitator to make critical family decisions that last longer than those decided by the court. By fostering longer-lasting agreements between parents, the program ultimately benefits children. Additionally, it improves judicial efficiency, reducing the number of cases that require court intervention.

We urge a “yes” vote on SB 97A.

Please contact Trent Wilson (twilson2@clackamas.us) for more information.