

## IV. Mediation

Mediation is a process in which a trained third party meets with disputants to assist them in reaching an agreement that is acceptable to all parties. At any time, an employee may request mediation to resolve a work-related concern. Mediation shall be employed only when all disputants agree to mediation. The mediation process is confidential; nothing disclosed during mediation may be communicated outside the context of that mediation process.



**Step 1.** At any time, an employee may request mediation of a work-related concern by delivering a written request to the Vice President of Human Resources.



**Step 2.** The Vice President of Human Resources will inform all parties to the dispute in writing, within five (5) working days of receiving the request, that they have five (5) working days to inform the Vice President in writing as to whether they accept or reject mediation.



**Step 3.** If any party to the dispute rejects mediation, the Vice President of Human Resources will so inform all parties to the dispute within five (5) working days. The proposed mediation will not take place.



**Step 4.** If all parties to the dispute accept mediation, the Vice President of Human Resources will assign a mediator and inform all parties of the assigned mediator within five (5) working days. Mediation temporarily halts other complaint or grievance procedures and timetables from the date of the request for mediation through the date that the mediator reports that mediation has been completed. If mediation is unsuccessful, the complaint or grievance continues from the point at which it was halted.



**Step 5.** An employee may object to the assignment of a particular mediator if there is a conflict of interest or other appropriate reason; in such cases the Vice President of Human Resources may assign another mediator.



**Step 6.** The mediator will begin the process of mediation immediately, schedule such meetings as the mediator considers appropriate, and complete the process as soon as is reasonably possible.



**Step 7.** When mediation is successfully completed, or when the mediator determines that mediation will not be successful in this case, the mediator will so inform the Vice President of Human Resources in writing.



**Step 8.** If there is a written agreement between the parties, the mediator must deliver a copy of the agreement to each party and deliver a sealed copy to the Vice President of Human Resources. This sealed copy may only be opened at the request of a party to the dispute as part of a complaint or grievance related to the same matter (except that any written agreement may be subject to state or federal open records laws or other law or regulation).