

MARYLAND
AGRICULTURAL
CONFLICT
RESOLUTION
SERVICE

Farm, Agricultural & Rural
Mediation Services



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Fact Sheet

- What is Maryland ACReS?** Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service is the official US Department of Agriculture (USDA)-certified agricultural mediation program for Maryland, offering confidential assistance to help resolve agriculture related disputes, before they end up in court.
- What is mediation?** Agricultural mediation is a voluntary, confidential process in which a neutral third party (the mediator) assists farmers, citizens, agricultural lenders, and government agencies to resolve disputes in a non-adversarial setting outside the traditional legal and regulatory processes.
- Why mediate?** Mediation usually is less costly, quicker, and more satisfactory than other forms of dispute resolution.
- What is mediated?** Mediation may involve conflicts between neighbors or communities, family farm issues and estate planning, agricultural credit issues by the borrower or creditor, adverse decisions by USDA agencies, or any dispute affecting the profitability of an agricultural operation.
- When to mediate?** Mediation is appropriate anytime a producer encounters conflicts or concerns with another citizen; when there are concerns or disagreements within the farming family regarding the family farm; when an agricultural producer is delinquent or is at risk for becoming delinquent on a loan; or when a producer receives written notice of an adverse decision from a government agency.
- What costs are involved?** An initial consultation with **Maryland ACReS** program staff and initial mediation session is at no charge. If additional mediation sessions are needed, costs are shared by the parties. Full or partial waivers of fees may be available based on income. Any additional legal, financial or technical advisors, if needed, are paid by the participants.
- Who to contact?** **Maryland ACReS** is a service of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. To learn more about the services offered contact us at:

Maryland Agricultural Conflict Resolution Service
Maryland Department of Agriculture
50 Truman Parkway – Room 208
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-841-5778 or toll free at 800-492-5590

MARTIN O'MALLEY, *Governor*
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