



New York State Unified Court System Office of Court Administration
Division of Professional and Court Services
Office of ADR Programs (UCS ADR Office)

Apprenticeship/Mentorship Programs: What Apprentices and Mentees Should Know

[Part 146 of the Rules of the Chief Administrative Judge](#) requires that prospective mediators who wish to serve on trial court rosters in the NYS Unified Court System take a minimum of 40 hours of [approved mediation training](#) and have [recent experience mediating actual cases](#) in the types of cases that will be referred to them. Many recently trained mediators who complete their 40 hours of training seek ways to get post-training experience mediating actual cases so they can apply to court rosters.

Apprenticeships and mentorships can provide recently trained mediators with the mediation experience they need to apply to trial court rosters, build relationships between experienced mediators and newer mediators, allow newer mediators to observe more experienced mediators, to co-mediate, to learn, ask questions, and get feedback in a safe and structured environment.

It is important to note that participation in any apprentice/mentorship program does not guarantee admission to any trial court roster.¹

Here are some points to consider before enrolling in a Part 146 Approved Apprenticeship/ Mentorship Program²:

- The ADR Office approved the apprenticeship/mentorship provider because the provider met or exceeded the expectations in the [Application](#) and the [Guidelines](#).
- Apprentices and Mentees are entitled to:
 - participate in a well-organized program with opportunities to mediate;
 - observe actual mediations;
 - be observed as a mediator in actual mediations;
 - take part in a conversation at the conclusion of any mediation opportunity, where they will explore what mediation skills they used effectively, and where there was room for improvement;
 - receive a final written evaluation by competent, experienced mediators who offer concrete constructive feedback;
 - understand whether and how any final evaluation will be used by the apprenticeship/mentorship program or any court rosters;
 - ask questions and receive clear answers. For example: how will feedback be given? Where will the cases come from? How long is the apprenticeship or mentorship expected to last? Who will see any final evaluations or reports?

¹ Final placement on any trial court roster is in the discretion of the local district administrative judge. A court's willingness to accept mediators at any given time may rely on a variety of factors, including but not limited to a court's need for mediators based on case volume and available mediators. Certain courts may also seek mediators with case-specific and other various professional skill sets.

² Most people who complete 40 hours of mediation training then seek to get experience mediating actual cases. The NYS UCS has adopted apprenticeship/mentorship guidelines and an application process for those organizations and experienced mentor-mediators who may want to offer a quality, hands-on, practical way for those who have completed mediation training to get the experience they need to serve on court rosters.

- Apprentices and Mentees are responsible for:
 - Reviewing and understanding any/all pre-requisites to joining particular court rosters.
 - Ensuring the apprenticeship provider is offering the needed experience to apply to any particular court roster, and that the apprenticeship provider has experience mediating that case-type.
 - Maintaining confidentiality of any mediations.
 - Keeping records from the apprenticeship/mentorship, including any final report ([see SAMPLE](#)) offered by the provider, and the name(s) and contact information of mentor(s) and/or observer(s) for references, if needed.