



## **Code of Conduct for observations of mediations or MIAMs by non-mediators**

Observations play a valuable role in helping professionals working with separating families, and students who may go on to work with separating families, learn about how mediation can help families. The purpose of observing a mediation, Mediation Information and Assessment Meetings (MIAMs) or intake meetings is for the observer to learn from the mediator. The observer should be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the mediation participants, and should not seek to participate in the mediation.

A mediator may invite an observer to observe one or more mediation sessions and/or MIAMs. Mediators must obtain consent from all participants before the observation starts. Some mediation participants may be unwilling to be observed as they feel that this may add to an already stressful situation or the observer will make them feel uncomfortable. It is important that mediation participants are at ease with any observer.

This **Code of Conduct** must be followed by those observing mediation:

1. Observers must behave courteously and professionally throughout the mediation they are observing.
2. Observers must enter and leave the meeting only when they are invited to do so by the mediator.
3. Observers must not make written notes.
4. Observers must play a passive role, observing what the mediator does.
5. Observers must not make observations out loud, react to what is said in a non-verbal way or contribute to the discussions in the mediation.
6. Observers must treat the information obtained during the mediation confidentially.
7. Observers must sign an agreement to confirm they will abide by these rules.

Observers may discuss the meeting they observed with the mediator after the session, in order to maximise learning opportunities.