

FAMILY HARMONY

2ND MEDIATION CHALLENGE 2026



MEDIATEGURU
Sharing the gift of Mediation with the World

22 – 25 Oct 2026



Launching – Specialized Mediation Competition

Leveraging the successful model of **MediateGuru's Series of Virtual International Mediation Competition (VIMC)**, this new initiative is designed to address the critical and growing demand for specialized skills in family dispute resolution. The aim is to provide a comprehensive guide for developing a compelling skill set that attracts top talent and emphasizes the unique career advantages of mastering family mediation.

Important Dates



- Last Date of Registration – October 15th, 2026
- Launching of General Information – October 20th, 2026
- Preliminary Round 1 – October 22nd, 2026
- Preliminary Round 2 – October 23rd, 2026
- Semi Finals – October 24th, 2026
- Finals – October 25th, 2026



The "Family Harmony"
Mediation Challenge 2026

01/16



Announcing

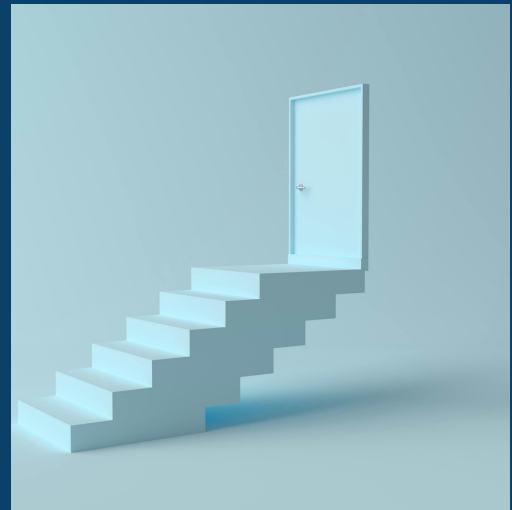
MediateGuru proudly announces the launch of "The Family Harmony Mediation Challenge 2026," a new, specialized mediation competition to be held virtually from **October 22nd to 25th, 2026**. This event distinguishes itself through its singular focus on family disputes, **setting it apart from general mediation competitions**.

Why this?

The strategic imperative for a family disputes-focused mediation competition **stems from the increasing prevalence and complexity of family disputes globally**. This competition is positioned as a timely and essential response to the evolving landscape of legal practice, where ADR, particularly mediation, is becoming paramount in family law.

A Specialized competition directly addresses this systemic need, **preparing participants for a fundamental paradigm shift in a major legal domain**. It equips future professionals with the emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills uniquely required in this sensitive context.

Intent of the Challenge



It is poised to play a crucial role in MediateGuru's broader mission of spreading awareness and providing practical exposure to the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) world, a commitment clearly articulated in the intent of the competition.



Our Hon'ble Guest(s)

We had the honour of having with us Industry leaders/
Judicial officers / Tier 1 Partners

- Justice N. Kotiswar Singh (Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice A.K. Sikri (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Hemant Gupta (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Ajay Rastogi (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Hrishikesh Roy (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Hima Kohli (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)
- Justice Jasmeet Singh (Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani (Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Justice Subramonium Prasad (Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Justice Tejas Karia (Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Justice Rajiv Shakdher (Former Chief Justice of the High Court of Himachal Pradesh)
- Justice Subodh Shah (Former Judge, High Court of Gujarat)
- Justice Najmi Waziri (Former Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua (Former Judge of the Gauhati High Court)
- Justice M.L. Mehta (Former Judge, High Court of Delhi)
- Mr. AJ Jawad (Registrar, International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC), Hyderabad)
- Dr. Mukul Shastri, General Counsel, Cube Highways
- Ms. Mehak Oberoi - Legal Head (Hydro-APAC), GE Vernova in Asia
- Ms. Ojasvita Srivastava - General Counsel, Securitas (APAC & Middle East)
- Ms. Urvashi Pathak, Senior Vice President and Head Legal, Axis Max Life Insurance
- Mr. Sukumar Pattjoshi (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India & Former Vice President Supreme Court Bar Association)
- Ms. Puja Anand (Senior Mediator)
- Mr. Gaurav Pachnanda, Senior Advocate at the Supreme Court of India
- Dr. Aman Hingorani (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India)
- Mr. Aruneshwar Gupta (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India)
- Mr. Pradeep Rai (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India)
- Mr. Vaibhav Gaggar (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India)
- Mr. Nalin Kohli (Senior Advocate at Supreme Court Of India)

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Significance of Family Disputes Mediation in Legal Careers

- Family disputes constitute a major component of legal caseloads globally, underscoring the critical need for specialized mediation expertise. For instance, in 2011, nearly half (48%) of divorces in Australia involved children under 18, impacting approximately 50,000 children annually.
- Conversely, mediation agreements that incorporate aspirational language about co-parental communication and child adjustment are **associated with less re-litigation, demonstrating mediation's effectiveness in fostering long-term stability for families.**
- The sheer volume of these disputes and their profound societal impact, particularly on children, positions family mediation not merely as a legal service but as a critical social intervention. This elevates the career path beyond conventional legal practice to one of significant social responsibility and impact, appealing to individuals seeking purpose-driven professional roles.
- Expertise in family mediation is increasingly crucial for aspiring legal professionals. Mediation is often a mandatory step for cases involving family disputes and the equitable distribution of assets in many jurisdictions. This makes proficiency in family mediation a non-negotiable skill for those aspiring to practice family law.
- Participation in a specialized family mediation competition cultivates essential skills vital for success in this field. Participants hone their Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) capabilities, facilitate networking with professionals, and gain opportunities to interact with experienced judges and established mediators.





About the Competition: *"Shaping Future Legal Leaders"*

MediateGuru proudly announces the Second Edition of "Family Harmony" Mediation Challenge 2026, a landmark competition specifically designed to cultivate expertise in family dispute mediation. This competition embodies MediateGuru's spirit of promoting peaceful resolutions and providing practical exposure to the nuanced world of family law Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). It offers law students an unparalleled opportunity to engage with complex family scenarios, develop critical mediation skills, and connect with leading ADR professionals specializing in family matters globally.

Objectives



- Cultivate Specialized Expertise
- Strategic Networking
- Enhance Empathetic Communication
- Master Online Family Mediation
- Overcome Unique Barriers
- Cross-Cultural Family Dynamics
- Digital Proficiency in Family ADR



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Join the Future of Family Dispute Resolution

The "Family Harmony" Mediation Challenge 2026 represents an unparalleled opportunity for law students to gain specialized skills, network with leaders in family law, and contribute meaningfully to a more harmonious society. This competition is meticulously designed to equip participants with the nuanced competencies essential for navigating the complexities of family disputes, a major and impactful component of legal practice. The structured learning environment, coupled with evaluation criteria tailored to the unique demands of family mediation, ensures that participants develop highly sought-after skills, including emotional intelligence and empathetic communication. Given that **mediation cases are majorly comprised of family disputes**, and the increasing societal recognition of mediation's benefits over traditional litigation in these sensitive matters, mastering family mediation is not merely an advantage but a necessity for career advancement. This challenge provides a direct pathway to acquiring these indispensable skills, **offering a distinct competitive edge in the legal job market**

Platform



The training session and subsequent competition rounds will take place on Zoom, facilitating participation from anywhere in the world.

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Chapter – I

- **Short Title and Commencement:** These rules shall be known as the 'Family Harmony Mediation Challenge Rules & Procedure, 2026'. They will officially come into force from the date of their publication on MediateGuru's official website.
- **Definitions:** The existing definitions from the VIMC rules have been adapted to explicitly include the context of family disputes where applicable. For instance, the "Competition" refers specifically to the "Family Harmony" Mediation Challenge 2026. The "Mediation Problem" refers to case scenarios specifically designed around family disputes, encompassing issues such as divorce, child custody, child support, spousal support, division of assets and debts, and post-divorce disputes.
- **Interpretation:** The Organizing Committee retains the right to interpret these rules as deemed appropriate to ensure fairness and equality among participants and organizers. Any interpretation made by the Committee regarding the application of these Rules & Procedure shall be conclusive and final, binding all stakeholders and participants.

Chapter – II

- **Eligibility:** To be eligible for participation, students must be registered as full-time or part-time law students in the academic year 2026-2027. Additionally, students who graduated in 2026, provided their graduation occurred no more than six months prior to the commencement of the competition, are also eligible to participate.



Chapter – II

- **Application Process:** The Organizing Committee will communicate the acceptance of registration via email. Participating teams are required to accurately fill in all necessary details in the provisional registration google form. A confirmation of participation email will be sent by the Organizing Committee upon verification of the entire process. Any additional charges incurred by the team during the payment process are to be borne by the team.
- **Withdrawal Procedure:** Any team wishing to withdraw from the competition may do so by sending a detailed email to the Organizing Committee. As stipulated, if a withdrawal occurs after the registration fee has been paid, the fee will not be refunded to the team.
- The registration fees for the "Family Harmony" Mediation Challenge 2026 are structured;
 - For Indian Teams - Rs. 4500/-
 - For European Teams - £90/-
 - For other International Teams - \$90/-

Note: The fee is inclusive of an exhaustive training session exclusively for the participants.

Chapter – III

- **Format of the Competition:** The competition is structured into Qualifying Rounds and Advanced Rounds. The Qualifying Rounds consist of two Preliminary Rounds, while the Advanced Rounds comprise two knock-out stages: the Semi-Final Round and the Final Round.



- **Composition of Team:** Each participating team will consist of three members: a Client, a Counsel, and a Mediator. In instances where a team has only two participants, one participant will assume the role of Mediator, and the other will act as the Advocate, representing the client's interests.
- **Language:** The official and sole language for all aspects of the competition, including submissions and sessions, shall be English.
- **Structure of the Competition:** The competition will span four days, commencing from October 22nd to October 25th, 2026. In the Preliminary Rounds, each Mediating Pair will serve once as the Responding Party and once as the Requesting Party in their respective sessions. The top four Mediating Pairs and Mediators from the Preliminary Rounds will advance to the Semi-Final Round. Subsequently, the top two Mediating Pairs and Mediators from the Semi-Final Round (from each room) will qualify for the Final Round. In the event of a tie in scores between two Mediating Pairs or Mediators in any round, the tie-breaker will be determined by "Mediation Advocacy" for the Mediating Pair and "Qualities of a Good Mediator" for the Mediator.
- **Time Period:** The allocated time periods for each round are as follows: Preliminary Round 1 and 2 will each be 60 minutes; the Semi-Final Round will be 75 minutes; and the Final Round will be 90 minutes.
- **Mediation Problem:** The Mediation Problem(s) for all rounds will be distributed via Notice Board three days prior to the respective round. These problems will be exclusively focused on complex and realistic family dispute scenarios, specifically designed to challenge participants in areas such as child custody, property division in divorce, spousal support, and inter-generational family conflicts.



- **Confidential Information:** Participants will receive confidential information 40 minutes prior to their allotted time slot. Strict adherence to confidentiality is paramount; participants are expressly prohibited from disclosing confidential information to any other participant throughout the competition, whether before or after their round. Any such disclosure will lead to immediate disqualification from the competition without any scope for appeal.
- **Scope of Interpretation:** Participants are required to restrict their interpretation of the problem to reasonable conclusions and are not permitted to create additional facts.
- **General Rules of the Competition:**
 - Each mediation session will involve two teams and two mediators competing in a Conference Room before the Judges.
 - A session typically comprises six individuals: two Mediators and two Mediating Pairs (each pair consisting of a client and a counsel).
 - The Mediator(s) are tasked with guiding the disputing parties towards a settlement.
 - The time period for each session is prescribed in the rules, and the Mediator(s) have the discretion to adopt a common code of procedure, provided it does not contravene the general rules of the competition.
 - No extra time will be granted under any circumstances. Regarding private caucuses and conferences, the Mediator(s) have sole discretion to call for these, though they must call for at least one to facilitate the mediation process.
 - A caucus is a private meeting between one party and the Mediator(s), while a conference is a joint session involving both parties and a Mediator.



- When a caucus is called, the other party must leave the room.
 - During a conference, both parties must be present.
 - While Mediator(s) may call for both, disputing parties may also request a caucus.
 - Participants are permitted to carry and use their own prepared notes and to make additional notes during the session.
 - However, using electronic devices into the Conference Room during a session is strictly prohibited, and no audio or videotaping of Mediation Sessions is allowed.
- **Clarifications:** Teams may submit queries regarding the mediation problem within the prescribed time frame. Responses to these clarifications are at the drafter's discretion, and clarifications will not be accepted after the specified deadline.
 - **Dress Code:** The dress code for the competition shall be business formals, reflecting the professional decorum expected in family law and mediation proceedings.
 - **Awards and Prizes:** The Mediator and the Mediating Pair who achieve the highest scores (evaluated separately) in the Final Round will be recognized as the "Best Mediator" and "Best Mediating Pair," respectively, and will be awarded a Certificate of Merit. The Runner-Up Mediator and Runner-Up Mediating Pair will also receive a Certificate of Merit. Certificates of Merit and Ranks will be awarded to the Top 5 Mediators and Mediating Pairs. The "Best Team" will be determined based on the highest average marks obtained in the Preliminary Round and will receive a certificate of merit. Every participating team will be awarded a "Certificate of Participation".



Chapter – III

- ***Judging Criteria for Mediators***
 - *Opening Statement of the Mediator (1-10 points)*
 - *First Caucus (1-10 points)*
 - *Conference (1-10 points)*
 - *Qualities Of A Good Mediator (1-10 points)*
 - *Cooperation Between Mediators (1-10 points)*
- ***Judging Criteria for Mediating Pair***
 - *Opening Statement. (1-10 points)*
 - *First Caucus (1-10 points)*
 - *Conference (1 – 10 points)*
 - *Teamwork Between Advocate and Client (1-10 points)*
 - *Overall Evaluation (1-10 points)*

Chapter – IV

- **Code of Conduct Applicable to Participants:** All teams are bound to adhere to the code of conduct and rules established by the organizing committee. Any behavior demonstrating indiscipline towards Judges, the Organizing Committee, staff members, or student volunteers will be dealt with strictly and may result in immediate disqualification from the competition without appeal. Any attempt to contact the framer(s) of the problem(s) or the panel of Judges prior to the competition will also lead to immediate disqualification without appeal.



Chapter – IV

- **Anonymity of Teams:** *Following registration and receipt of acknowledgment, teams will be assigned a unique Team Code, which will serve as their sole identifier throughout the competition. No participating team is permitted to reveal their identity in any other form during the competition. Violation of this rule will incur severe penalties or disqualification, as determined by the Organizing Committee, whose decision in this regard shall be final and binding without appeal.*
- **Scouting Policy:** *No member of any team will be permitted to observe the proceedings in any Conference Room where their team is not actively participating, for as long as their team remains in the competition. Any violation of this rule will lead to strict actions, which may include, but are not limited to, the expulsion of the offending team from the competition.*
- **Walkover:** *If any team fails to appear at their allotted time, the opposing team will be granted a walkover, and their scores from the previous or upcoming round will be doubled to compensate.*

Chapter – IV

- **Power to Make Amendments, Modifications or Revocations:** The Organizing Committee reserves the power to amend, modify, or revoke the provisions of these rules, either partially or wholly, subject to considerations of feasibility, transparency, and the smooth functioning of the competition. Any such amendment or modification will come into force upon its official notification and will be deemed an integral part of these rules.



Chapter – V

- **Savings Clause:** *Nothing within these Rules & Procedure shall prejudice any right that a participant would have possessed prior to the enactment of these Rules & Procedure. Furthermore, the Organizing Committee or MediateGuru shall not be held responsible for any actions of the participants that violate the present Rules & Procedure, whether occurring before or during the course of the competition.*





Why Participate?

There is a direct correlation between the experience gained in this competition and success in family law careers. The skills cultivated—including active listening, emotional intelligence, problem-solving, neutrality, understanding of family law, and conflict management—are directly transferable to a thriving career in family law, whether as a mediator, family law attorney, or related professional. The competition's focus on realistic family dispute scenarios provides practical experience that significantly sets participants apart in job markets. The ability to resolve sensitive family matters confidentially and efficiently ⁴ is highly valued by clients and legal firms. This competition not only develops essential skills but also signals to potential employers a participant's specialized interest and foundational competence in a high-demand, emotionally complex legal area. By participating in a specialized family mediation competition, students proactively demonstrate their interest and foundational competence in a niche that is both high-volume and high-stakes (concerning emotional well-being and children's welfare). This specialization makes them more attractive to family law firms, ADR centers, and related organizations, as it reduces the training burden for employers and indicates a genuine passion for the field. It provides a tangible credential that differentiates them from general law graduates, offering a competitive advantage beyond general legal qualifications.





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Contact Us

For any information, visit us at www.mediateguru.com/familymediation or write us at admin@mediateguru.com

Ms. Garima Rana (Chief Event Coordinator)

- Phone: +91 8800 474 226
- Email: garima@mediateguru.com

Mr. Param Bhamra (Event Coordinator)

- Phone: +91 9971 087 756
- Email: parambhamrapb@gmail.com

About MediateGuru

MediateGuru is a distinguished institute in the realm of alternative dispute resolution, committed to facilitating amicable resolutions through expert mediation and arbitration services. It prides itself on being a dedicated community focused on promoting peaceful resolutions. MediateGuru plays a pivotal role in enriching the ADR field through meticulously curated events, competitions, and conferences. This includes its existing "Series of Mediation Competition", which serves as the foundation for this new specialized event. MediateGuru is dedicated to cultivating the next generation of resolution experts, with a particular emphasis on addressing the growing need for family mediation specialists.



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