

## **Maryland Home Improvement Mediation Works For You!**

The Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC) in partnership with Community Mediation Maryland and the University of Maryland School of Law's Mediation Clinic have developed a program to help homeowners and contractors amicably resolve disputes for the benefit of both parties. The project offers an opportunity a forum to reach a faster, easier, and cheaper resolution to conflicts. If successful, you will save time and money, and avoid the hassle of having to attend an administrative hearing. The best part is that mediation is free, voluntary and you decide whether or not to settle. The program works for you because you can:

### **Save Time**

- MHIC can schedule your mediation in as little as 2 weeks;
- mediation can be done in a few hours and a hearing can take a day or more;
- you can schedule mediation at a time and location convenient for you; and
- there will never be the possibility of a lengthy appeal that can last several years.

### **Save Money**

- the faster this dispute is resolved, the less money you will have to spend;
- with mediation, you do not need to hire an attorney or an expert; and
- you will not have to take time off from your job.

### **Avoid the Hassle of a Hearing**

- a hearing can be a lengthy and frustrating process.
- you may not like the judge's decision.

### **Is mediation right for you?**

For many homeowners and contractors, mediation is the right answer for resolving a dispute, especially when both parties wish to reach an amicable solution.

### **What happens if you settle?**

If both parties agree to settle the dispute, the mediator drafts an agreement that is reviewed and signed by both parties. MHIC then closes the complaint filed by the

homeowner and it does not become part of the contractor's complaint history.

### **What happens if you don't settle?**

If you do not reach an agreement, then the complaint will be investigated by MHIC to determine if the contractor violated the Home Improvement Law. Following the investigation, MHIC may elect to pursue regulatory charges against the contractor. In addition, you may have the opportunity to file a claim against the Home Improvement Guaranty Fund. If the claim is for more than \$5,000, a hearing will be required. The hearing process, including possible appeals, may take 2 or more years to complete.

If you have additional questions, please contact MHIC at 410-230-6309 or by email to [mhic@dllr.state.md.us](mailto:mhic@dllr.state.md.us).