

FMCS Assists Parties in Negotiation of Initial Collective Bargaining Agreements

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) is an independent, neutral federal agency that provides conflict management services. As part of these services, FMCS assists parties in initial contract negotiations at no cost to the parties.

First time or “initial” contract bargaining takes longer and is more often litigated than other types of bargaining. The use of a mediator early in negotiations can often lead to significant mutual gains.

FMCS mediators can assist in initial contract negotiations by providing mediation, facilitation, and/or training services to the parties. Mediation is a process that occurs when a neutral, third-party facilitates discussion to assist the parties in negotiating their contract. FMCS has no authority to impose an agreement on the parties

Examples of training that FMCS mediators can tailor for the parties include:

- How to negotiate an initial collective bargaining agreement;
- How to manage a contract and handle grievances;
- How to build effective relationships; and
- How to repair the relationship if communications have broken down or circumstances have changed.

For additional information or to request FMCS services, [contact your local FMCS mediator](#) or visit our website to learn more about [initial contract services](#) and [skills development training](#).

Useful links from other federal agencies:

- Department of Labor - <https://www.worker.gov> and <https://www.employer.gov>
- National Labor Relations Board - <https://www.nlr.gov>
- Federal Labor Relations Authority - <https://www.flra.gov>



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