



## Probation Association of New Jersey

*Serving New Jersey Since 1904*

*An affiliate of the American Probation and Parole Association*

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First VP, Supervisor's Unit

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## Presidential Newsletter

**April 7, 2014**

### Line and Supervisors Mediation

Currently the Line and Supervisors are preparing to enter into mediation. The Line Officers' mediation is scheduled for April 21 and the Supervisors' First mediation session is scheduled for April 10.

What is mediation? Mediation is an attempt to find an acceptable resolution of the parties' dispute. In mediation, a neutral, third party helps those in conflict define issues, explore solutions and reach practical, workable and mutually satisfactory agreements. Mediation seeks to prevent conflicts from escalating and the focus in mediation is on mutual acceptability. The Public Employment Relations Commission conducts several types of mediation: contract mediation, grievance mediation and settlement mediation.

Both PANJ Units will be involved in contract mediation. Contract mediation is an extension of the parties' duty to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement concerning a bargaining unit's wages, hours and working conditions. When public employers and employees' representatives are unable to agree on the terms of a written contract establishing the wages, hours and working conditions of bargaining unit employees, PERC provides mediation to help the parties reach an agreement.

The parties to mediation can generally expect the following to occur:

Once PERC receives a request for mediation from the parties, a staff mediator will be assigned. The mediator will then contact the parties to set a date for an initial meeting.

Parties may request a particular staff mediator be assigned to their case. However, the request must be jointly made and the requested mediator may not be available at the time of the request.

Mediations may begin in a "joint caucus" with both parties present, or may begin with the parties separated, or in "caucus". Some mediations may begin with a joint session and later break into two "caucus" rooms. Some may be conducted entirely as joint sessions or entirely in caucus. The format for any mediation depends on the mediator's personal style and the particular circumstances of the parties and their dispute.

Mediation for both units is necessary due to significant issues regarding salary, grievance and discipline articles and the effort to remove the Letter of Agreement from both Contracts. Without these issues being resolved, it will negatively affect every member, regardless of their time on the job and through the remainder of their careers.

Please contact your respective First Vice President, Ellen Cribbin, Line; Gavin Cummings, Supervisors at 1-732-223-1799, if you have any questions.

Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwight Covalleskie". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dwight Covalleskie

PANJ, President