
HELPING YOU COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

This brochure was created to help guide you through any neighbor challenges that might occur. We all understand that sometimes people disagree and that's okay. It is how we react to these situations that can result in a positive or negative outcome. We hope this mediation guide will help you.

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Code Compliance

4430 S. Adams County Pkwy.
1st Floor, Suite W2000B
Brighton, CO 80601

720.523.6800
adcogov.org



How TO TALK TO



Your NEIGHBOR

ABOUT A CONCERN



How to Talk to Your Neighbor About a Concern



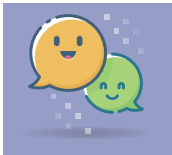
Research

Before bringing up a concern, make sure there is a problem. Is this an occasional annoyance, or does it seriously affect your quality of life? Is it an ongoing issue or a one-time event? Check with local or state organizations for regulations that specify what constitutes a violation.



Keep a Log

Document your concerns with dates, times, and a description of the event(s). This helps determine if there's a pattern, and it can also help the neighbor recognize the concern.



Approach

Talk in a calm, non-confrontational manner and never approach while angry. It is best to assume the neighbor isn't aware or is not intentionally causing the concern. Try not to start the conversation with an accusation or immediately bring up regulations/laws. Instead, try for a friendly conversation to set the tone. The end goal should also include building a stronger relationship.



Explain

Introduce the problem as a common concern. Instead of "remove that tree; I don't have a good view," say, "those limbs look heavy, are you worried they may fall during a storm?" If you must state the complaint directly, don't be afraid to say you are sorry to complain. Have a reasonable solution readily available such as "would you be willing to turn down the music after 9 p.m.," or "would you be willing to trim the tree before it causes damage?" Take note if the neighbor is elderly or may not have the financial means or the ability to complete the request. Offer to share the cost or perform the work. This will also strengthen the bond and form a great relationship.



In Writing

It may be difficult to reach a neighbor. If a note is needed, make sure it is written when you are calm while using non-hostile language. Ask a friend to read the letter to make sure the tone is personable and friendly. Leaving a phone number or email will help to ensure communication is more open.



Outside Help

Most neighbors want to correct the situation, but that may not always be the case. If you are met with hostility or are being ignored, you may want to seek outside help. Ask a non-biased third party to mediate. Does he/she feel the music is too loud after 10 p.m.? Is the dog's barking a nuisance? Ask for their suggestion on solutions. If necessary, contact public officials. Keep in mind this approach may solve an immediate problem, but it rarely improves your relationship with your neighbor.



Adams County Mediation

If you are a resident of unincorporated Adams County, you may be eligible to receive free mediation assistance. This service is performed by a professional mediation expert whose goal is to create a safe environment for both parties. The mediator will ensure everyone is able to speak and an agreed upon goal is reached.

How to be a Good Neighbor



Say, "Hi!"

Well-connected neighbors can create a warm and safe environment to ensure everyone is looked after. By exchanging phone numbers or emails, everyone can remain connected in case of an emergency or for a neighborhood barbecue. Resources such as Nextdoor, neighborhood watch, and local groups are great ways to stay connected.



Pets

Not everyone is a dog or cat lover, so show responsibility for your pets. Keep them off the neighbor's lawn and pick up after them. Be mindful of nuisance barking.



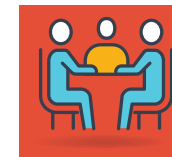
Helping Hands

If you notice a neighbor's lawn needs mowed, sidewalk needs shoveled, or home needs repairs, consider there may be reasons he/she is unable to complete these tasks. Strike up a conversation and offer to help. Hear them out and try to see things from their perspective.



Social Events/Noise

Be respectful of your neighbors and how you may affect them. It might be best to look at the neighborhood as a shared space. For social events, make sure guests do not block driveways or use designated parking spots. Follow any ordinances/laws and consider inviting neighbors to the gathering. If you are performing any building or construction work and a neighbor works nights, consider reaching out to see if there is a good time to ensure the least amount of disturbance.



Talk it Out

If a neighbor approaches with a concern, hear them out. Remain calm while being objective and non-defensive. For example, if you have a barking dog, it may be barking bit louder or more often than you are aware of. Think of solutions that are reasonable and realistic.