

232C.2 Stay — mediation — referral to family in need of assistance.

1. Prior to an emancipation hearing held pursuant to [section 232C.1](#), the court, on its own motion, may stay the proceedings, and refer the parties to mediation or request that the department of health and human services investigate any allegations of child abuse or neglect contained in the petition, and order that a written report be prepared and filed by the department.

2. If a minor's parent or guardian objects to the petition filed pursuant to [section 232C.1](#), the juvenile court shall stay the proceedings and refer the parties to mediation unless the juvenile court finds that mediation would not be in the best interests of the minor.

3. If an agreement is reached through mediation, the parties shall file the signed agreement with the juvenile court.

4. Notwithstanding [subsections 1 through 3](#), the juvenile court, on its own motion, may discontinue emancipation proceedings pursuant to [this chapter](#) and interpret the petition as a petition to initiate family in need of assistance proceedings and consider the petition under [sections 232.122 through 232.127](#).

[2009 Acts, ch 153, §4](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §650](#)

Referred to in [§232.125](#), [232C.3](#)