

# Small Claims in Hawai'i

Small Claims: A lawsuit for \$5,000 or less with simple rules and usually no lawyers.

For answers to frequently asked questions, information about fees, and the forms you need to use, you can [Click Here](#).

To learn more about small claims in O'ahu (1st Circuit): [Click Here](#)

To learn more about small claims in Maui (2nd Circuit): [Click Here](#)

To learn more about small claims in Hawai'i (3rd Circuit): [Click Here](#)

## What is Online Dispute Resolution?

A court run website where people solve a problem without going to court.

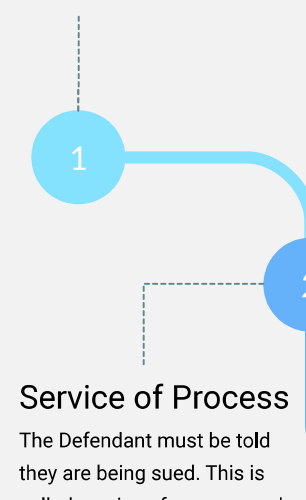


## Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)

The Plaintiff and Defendant can agree to a solution on their own if they want. Or they can use ODR and a mediator (neutral person) to help them come to an agreement. If they agree, the case is over.

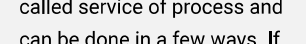
## How Does the Case Start?

A case is started when one person (Plaintiff) sues someone else (Defendant) for money.



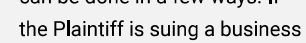
## Service of Process

The Defendant must be told they are being sued. This is called service of process and can be done in a few ways. If the Plaintiff is suing a business they may need to do things differently.



## What Does the Defendant Do?

The person being sued (Defendant) has a few options, but they can register for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) to get started. If they do nothing the Plaintiff will win (Default Judgment). If they want to sue the Plaintiff back, they may (Counter Claim). The Defendant must act on time.



## Trial: Judge Decides

If there is no agreement the case goes to trial. At trial the judge decides who wins. To help the judge make a decision both sides should bring evidence (and copies for everyone). Things like: photos, receipts, contracts, and witnesses. If one side doesn't show up, the other side will win. The judge's decision is final.

## The Person Who Has To Pay

The two sides can agree to a payment plan or schedule, but the person who lost has to pay. If they don't pay, the winner can ask the court to let them gain access to the person who lost's wages or bank accounts.

