

# Small Claims Research Guide

## Overview

This research guide includes information and resources on filing small claims cases. By statute, a civil claim under \$20,000 can be heard in a Justice of the Peace court. (*Gov. Code §27.031*) Claims under \$20,000 are often referred to as a “small claim.” The resources listed below are not exhaustive and may not include the most up-to-date information. It is for information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice or act as the substitute for legal counsel.

*Related guides: Civil Appeals*

## Statutes and Codes

Texas Statutes Online [www.statutes.capitol.texas.gov](http://www.statutes.capitol.texas.gov)

Texas Government Code

- Ch. 27 Justice Courts  
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.27.htm>

Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code (CPRC)

- Ch. 15, Subchapter E – Suits Brought in Justice Court  
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CP/htm/CP.15.htm#E>

Texas Rules of Civil Procedure (TRCP)

- Rules 500-510 (Rules of Practice in Justice Courts) <https://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/rules-standards/>

## Secondary Resources in Print

**Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated KFT 1230.5**

- Government, Vols. 1, 2, 3A
- Property, Vol. 5 §52.002
- Local Government, Vols. 1 part 2 and 1A

- Civil Practice & Remedies, Vol. 2A part 1

**O'Connor's Texas Rules Civil Trials KFT 1729 .A1903**

- TRCP 500.3(a) Application of Rules in Justice Court Cases – Small Claims Case

**West's Texas Digest KFT 1257 .W48**

- Vol. 12A § 174-176.5 Generally, Courts

**Texas Litigation Guide KFT 1730 .T4**

- Vol. 3, Ch. 46 Justice Court Proceedings §46.03[2] Small Claims Cases, §46.101 Petition-Small Claims Case

**Texas Forms Pleading and Practice KFT 1730 .A65 T482**

- Generally, §153:30

**Texas Collections Manual KFT1367 .C6 T49**

- Small Claims Jurisdiction §15.1:2

**Texas Practice KFT 1280 .T4**

- Vols. 35 to 36A §23.23 Generally, County and Special Dist

**West's Texas Forms KFT 1268 .W47**

- Vol. 10, Civil Trials, §33:15 Small Claims Court Affidavit

**Texas Jur KFT 1265 .T48**

- Vol. 6, Appellate Review § 836
- Vol. 12B, Constitutional Law § 320
- Vol. 16, Courts § 11; Costs § 123
- Vol. 47, Judges § 50
- Vol. 48, Judgments § 394

**Neighbor Law: Fences, Trees, Boundaries & Noise KF 639 .Z9 J67**

- Ch. 20 Small Claims Court

## Online Resources

Tarrant County Justice of the Peace Courts Forms (*see also individual court pages for more information*)

<https://www.tarrantcounty.com/en/justice-of-the-peace-courts/forms-online.html>

Texas Justice Court Training Center (TJCTC)

- Civil Cases Deskbook  
<https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/texas-small-claims-court-32055.html>
- Filing a Small Claims Case  
<https://www.tjctc.org/SRL/small-claim-plaintiff.html>
- When a Small Claims Case Has Been Filed Against You  
<https://www.tjctc.org/SRL/small-claim-defendant.html>

Small Claims (Texas Law Help)

<https://texaslawhelp.org/money-debt/small-claims>

Small Claims Cases – Research Guide (TSLL)

<https://guides.sll.texas.gov/small-claims>

Texas Small Claims Court: An Overview (NOLO)

<https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/texas-small-claims-court-32055.html>

## Legal Assistance

**Legal Lines – Ask Attorneys simple legal questions (free service)**

- Tarrant County LegalLine Sign-up  
<https://www.tarrantbar.org/>
- Dallas County LegalLine Sign-up  
<https://www.dallasbar.org/index.cfm?pg=legalline>

**Tarrant County Bar Association Lawyer Referral**

**Service:** 817-336-4101 (\$20 for the first 30 minutes)