

## Small Claims Court in Texas – What You Need to Know

Small Claims Court is a simple and low-cost way to settle civil disputes without needing a lawyer.

### 1. What It's For

You can sue for up to **\$20,000** for things like:

- Unpaid debts
- Property damage
- Broken contracts
- Landlord-tenant issues

### 2. Where to File

File in the **Justice of the Peace court** in the county where the person you're suing lives or where the issue happened.

### 3. Filing Fees

- **\$154.00** to file if the person is in your county.
- **\$54.00** if they live in a different county — you'll also need to contact the **right agency** (like a constable or sheriff) in that county to serve them.

### 4. Do You Need a Lawyer?

No. You can represent yourself, but you're allowed to hire a lawyer if you want.

### 5. What Happens Next

- The person you're suing (the defendant) gets served with court papers.
- They must respond, and then the court sets a hearing.
- You'll both tell your side, show any proof, and the judge decides.

### 6. If You Win

If the judge rules in your favor and the person doesn't pay, you may need to take steps to collect the money.