

# SMALL CLAIMS COURT A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE

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**How many times have you wanted to take someone to court...**



...only to reject the idea because of the high cost or hiring an attorney?

You may have even found

it almost impossible to find an attorney who is willing to take on a case of less than \$10,000.00. It just isn't worth their time for the amount of compensation they can expect. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find attorneys who will consider cases which do not present a chance for a big reward.

It becomes very frustrating to have a client refuse to pay you for work you have done and find it is almost impossible to do much about it because of the costs of hiring an attorney. Attorney fees can range from \$300.00 to \$500.00 per hour plus. Costs are additional and must be paid as you go. This must be paid out before you even have a chance to get the defendant in court. Then there is the time spent in court and additional time collecting if you prevail. All the time the meter is running. This expense is recoverable when you win but may take a long time to be made whole.

There is an alternative solution to the situation in the form of Small Claims Court, also known as The Peoples Court. You have most likely seen a form of it on TV with Judge Judy and others. In reality it is not as seen on TV. However it is a relatively simple process if you do your home work.

Using small claims court is for claims of \$5,000.00 or less plus any filing fees, costs and interest. The cost and fees are somewhat reasonable

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and fully recoverable when you prevail. At any rate the costs will most likely be less than an hour or two with an attorney. Don't get me wrong. There are times when it is most important to have a knowledgeable attorney to protect your interests, but self help can be very rewarding for smaller claims.

In order to have a good chance at winning in Small Claims Court it is advisable to do some home work. Material is available that will help you prepare to do battle. Forms and information can all be downloaded to save yourself a trip to the court house.

You can download the necessary information and forms on our website. A full set of instructions is included along with practical advice to help you through the court procedures. It would be a shame to lose money or other things of value just because of a lack of knowledge, or fear of doing what is necessary to protect your interests. Before you consider Small Claims Court you should ask yourself a few important questions.

**Have you exhausted all your options:**

- **Sent a demand letter demanding payment within a specified time period? It should be sent certified return receipt requested.**
- **Have you made personal contact and demanded payment? Document any conversations and keep it with your evidence.**
- **Do you have all the proof in order to plead your case in court? Set up a separate file with all the evidence to prove your case.**
- **Are you going to need any witnesses and are they willing to testify? If you need a witness, and they are unwilling to testify, you may need to subpoena the witness.**

There are a myriad of other items to consider before going to court. Once you have examined the situation fully you will be ready to take action.

Go to our website to get the necessary papers to file in Dade, Broward or Palm Beach county. Along with the forms you will receive a complete guide to small claims filing and procedures. Becoming familiar with the workings of Small Claims Court will make your day in court very rewarding.

### **About Grass River Publishing:**

Grass River Publishing is dedicated to teaching individuals and companies what is needed to protect receivables. Being in the business for thirty years and seeing first hand hard working individuals and companies get into trouble collecting money due them, we felt it would be a benefit to share our own experiences. Collecting receivables and contract payments for services rendered can be as much work as doing the job itself.

Our experience has shown us there a infinite ways customers avoid paying their bills, some intensional some not. We have spent many hours in court collecting from slow and non payers. That experience has taught us what things are needed to win in court. This isn't a foolproof system, but it will greatly enhance your chances when you have to do battle.

We invite you to contact us for the latest schedule of seminars near you. We also will be glad to consult with you on an individual basis, or present an in-house seminar.



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