



# Quick Resource Guides: Small Claims Court

## How to

**Small Claims v. Limited Civil cases:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims-or-limited-civil>

How to determine if you should file your case in Small Claims Court.

**Filing a Small Claims Case:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims-california>

Steps involved in filing a case in Small Claims Court, with links to court forms.

From Alameda County: [https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/small-claims-plaintiffs\\_122024.pdf](https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/small-claims-plaintiffs_122024.pdf)

**Write a Demand Letter:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims/ask-for-money>

Interactive program that helps you write a demand letter.

**Responding to a Small Claims Suit:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims/respond-claim-order>

From Alameda County: [https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/small-claims-defendants\\_122024.pdf](https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/small-claims-defendants_122024.pdf)

**Submit Evidence Electronically:** <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/online-services/digital-evidence-portal>

The court created the Digital Evidence Portal for the submission of electronic evidence in Small Claims departments.

**Small Claims Appeals:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims/after-trial/appeal-decision>

Who can appeal a Small Claims Court judgment.

**Collecting Your Money:** <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims/after-trial/if-you-win>;

From Alameda County: [https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/collecting-your-judgment-122223\\_0.pdf](https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/collecting-your-judgment-122223_0.pdf)

## Forms

- Small Claims Forms (All): <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/small-claims-forms>
- Interactive Form Builder (Law Help Interactive) - Plaintiff's Claim: <https://lawhelpinteractive.org/Interview/GenerateInterview/1489/engine>
- Small Claims Forms with samples from the LA County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs <https://dcba.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/SCC-Sample-Forms-2024.pdf>

## Library Books

***Everybody's Guide to Small Claims Court in California***

- Available at the Reference desk, call number KFC976 .Z9 W37 2021 Also available as an eBook

***California Judges Benchbook - Small Claims Court and Consumer Law***

- Available at the Reference desk, call number KFC976 .C34

## eBooks

***California Judges' Benchguide - Small Claims:***

- <http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/protem/pubs/bg34.pdf>

***Everybody's Guide to Small Claims Court in California***

- Free Nolo Press eBook provided by Ebsco. Visit the law library site under Library databases <https://lawlibrary.alamedacountyca.gov/library-databases/> for the link and credentials to log in.

## Videos

### Small Claims: Where You Begin

<https://www.lalawlibrary.org/hidden-classes/1894-on-demand-small-claims-where-you-begin-pbw>

This video, presented by the LA Law Library, provides information you need to go to small claims court with confidence.

### A Guide to Going to Court

<https://www.lawhelpca.org/resource/guide-to-court-rules>

What you should do to prepare for your upcoming court date depends on what type of case you have. In this section we give you general guidelines for how to best prepare yourself for court.

### Preparing for Your Small Claims Trial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBo00nSnxB4&t=7s>

Created by the California Courts Self-Help Center. Learn how to prepare your questions, evidence, notes, and summary of events before you go to small claims court.

## Free Legal Help

### Alameda County Court Self-Help Center

<https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/self-help>

Contact the SHC via phone or chat to ask a questions, make an appointment, or register for a workshop. The Self-Help Center does not take walk-in patrons, but you may make an appointment to talk to someone in person.

**LiveChat** – Monday -Thursday, 9AM-12PM

- Access via “Need Help” chat widget: <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/self-help>
- Login early. They may stop taking chats before the stated hours once reaching capacity.

#### Phones

- Call: (510) 272-1393, Mon-Thurs, 2PM-4PM
- Voicemails can only be left during phone hours; Messages are returned within 5 business days.

#### Workshop

- **Start Small Claims Workshop** offered monthly.

### Community Legal Assistance Saturday Program (CLASP)

<https://lawlibrary.alamedacountyca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Virtual-CLASP-Flyer.pdf>

Free all-topics telephone legal clinic on the first Saturday/month. Volunteer attorneys speak with individuals for 15-20 minutes.

To make an appointment, call the intake line at (510) 485-9933 between 10:00 am - noon on the first Saturday/month and an attorney will call you back later that day.

## Consult an Attorney

**BALI Bay Area Legal Incubator** - 125 12<sup>th</sup> St. Oakland, CA Mezzanine Level

Affordable legal services. Some attorneys offer sliding scale fees. In-take form available on website, and you can also read the profiles and get contact information for the BALI attorneys.

<https://www.bayarealegalincubator.org/>