

# STATE OF NEW YORK

297

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. GOTTFRIED, DINOWITZ, COLTON, CAHILL, WEPRIN, OTIS  
-- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BARNWELL, CARROLL, GLICK, LALOR,  
PERRY -- read once and referred to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the uniform city court act, the uniform district court  
act, the uniform justice court act and the New York city civil court  
act, in relation to obtaining jurisdiction over certain defendants

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-  
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 1801 of the uniform city court act, as amended by  
2 chapter 65 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as follows:

3 § 1801. Small claims defined.

4 The term "small claim" or "small claims" as used in this act shall  
5 mean and include any cause of action for money only not in excess of  
6 five thousand dollars exclusive of interest and costs, or any action  
7 commenced by a party aggrieved by an arbitration award rendered pursuant  
8 to part 137 of the rules of the chief administrator of the courts (22  
9 NYCRR Part 137) in which the amount in dispute does not exceed \$5,000,  
10 provided that the defendant either resides, or has an office for the  
11 transaction of business or a regular employment[~~7~~] within the county, or  
12 where the claimant is or was a tenant or lessee of real property owned  
13 by the defendant and the claim relates to such tenancy or lease, and  
14 such real property is situated within the county.

15 § 2. Subdivision (a) of section 1803 of the uniform city court act, as  
16 amended by chapter 309 of the laws of 1996, the opening paragraph as  
17 amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 686 of the laws of 2003, is  
18 amended to read as follows:

19 (a) Small claims shall be commenced upon the payment by the claimant  
20 of a filing fee of fifteen dollars for claims in the amount of one thou-  
21 sand dollars or less and twenty dollars for claims in the amount of more  
22 than one thousand dollars, without the service of a summons and, except  
23 by special order of the court, without the service of any pleading other  
24 than a statement of his cause of action by the claimant or someone in  
25 his behalf to the clerk, who shall reduce the same to a concise, written

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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1 form and record it in a docket kept especially for such purpose. Such  
2 procedure shall provide for the sending of notice of such claim by ordi-  
3 nary first class mail and certified mail with return receipt requested  
4 to the party complained against (1) at his residence, if he resides  
5 within the county, and his residence is known to the claimant, or (2) at  
6 his office or place of regular employment within the county if he does  
7 not reside therein or his residence within the county is not known to  
8 the claimant, or (3) where the claimant is or was a tenant or lessee of  
9 real property owned by the defendant and the claim relates to such  
10 tenancy or lease and the notice of claim cannot be sent under paragraph  
11 one or two of this subdivision, at any place in the county or an adjoin-  
12 ing county where claimant may mail or otherwise deliver rent. If, after  
13 the expiration of twenty-one days, such ordinary first class mailing has  
14 not been returned as undeliverable, the party complained against shall  
15 be presumed to have received notice of such claim. Such notice shall  
16 include a clear description of the procedure for filing a counterclaim,  
17 pursuant to subdivision (c) of this section.

18 Such procedure shall further provide for an early hearing upon and  
19 determination of such claim. No filing fee, however, shall be demanded  
20 or received on small claims of employees who shall comply with § 1912 of  
21 this act which is hereby made applicable, except that necessary mailing  
22 costs shall be paid.

23 § 3. Section 1801 of the uniform district court act, as amended by  
24 chapter 65 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as follows:

25 § 1801. Small claims defined.

26 The term "small claim" or "small claims" as used in this act shall  
27 mean and include any cause of action for money only not in excess of  
28 five thousand dollars exclusive of interest and costs, or any action  
29 commenced by a party aggrieved by an arbitration award rendered pursuant  
30 to part one hundred thirty-seven of the rules of the chief administrator  
31 of the courts (22 NYCRR Part 137) in which the amount in dispute does  
32 not exceed five thousand dollars, provided that the defendant either  
33 resides, or has an office for the transaction of business or a regular  
34 employment[7] within a district of the court in the county, or where the  
35 claimant is or was a tenant or lessee of real property owned by the  
36 defendant and the claim relates to such tenancy or lease, and such real  
37 property is situated within a district of the court in the county.

38 § 4. Subdivision (a) of section 1803 of the uniform district court  
39 act, as amended by section 31 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws of  
40 2003, is amended to read as follows:

41 (a) Small claims shall be commenced upon the payment by the claimant  
42 of a filing fee of fifteen dollars for claims in the amount of one thou-  
43 sand dollars or less and twenty dollars for claims in the amount of more  
44 than one thousand dollars, without the service of a summons and, except  
45 by special order of the court, without the service of any pleading other  
46 than a statement of his cause of action by the claimant or someone in  
47 his behalf to the clerk, who shall reduce the same to a concise, written  
48 form and record it in a docket kept especially for such purpose. Such  
49 procedure shall provide for the sending of notice of such claim by ordi-  
50 nary first class mail and certified mail with return receipt requested  
51 to the party complained against (1) at his residence, if he resides  
52 within a district of the court in the county, and his residence is known  
53 to the claimant, or (2) at his office or place of regular employment  
54 within such a district if he does not reside therein or his residence  
55 within such a district is not known to the claimant, or (3) where claim-  
56 ant is or was a tenant or lessee of real property owned by the defendant

1 and the claim relates to such tenancy or lease and the notice of claim  
2 cannot be sent under paragraph one or two of this subdivision, at any  
3 place in the state where claimant may mail or otherwise deliver rent.

4 If, after the expiration of twenty-one days, such ordinary first class  
5 mailing has not been returned as undeliverable, the party complained  
6 against shall be presumed to have received notice of such claim. Such  
7 notice shall include a clear description of the procedure for filing a  
8 counterclaim, pursuant to subdivision (c) of this section.

9 Such procedure shall further provide for an early hearing upon and  
10 determination of such claim. No filing fee, however, shall be demanded  
11 or received on small claims of employees who shall comply with § 1912  
12 (a) of this act which is hereby made applicable, except that necessary  
13 mailing costs shall be paid.

14 § 5. Section 1801 of the uniform justice court act, as amended by  
15 chapter 76 of the laws of 1994, is amended to read as follows:

16 § 1801. Small claims defined.

17 The term "small claim" or "small claims" as used in this act shall  
18 mean and include any cause of action for money only not in excess of  
19 three thousand dollars exclusive of interest and costs, provided that  
20 the defendant either resides, or has an office for the transaction of  
21 business or a regular employment[7] within the municipality where the  
22 court is located, or where claimant is or was a tenant or lessee of real  
23 property owned by the defendant and the claim relates to such tenancy or  
24 lease, and such real property is situated within the municipality where  
25 the court is located. However, where a judge of the county court, pursu-  
26 ant to subdivision (g) of section three hundred twenty-five of the civil  
27 practice law and rules, transfers a small claim from the town or village  
28 court having jurisdiction over the matter to another town or village  
29 court within the same county, the court to which it is transferred shall  
30 have jurisdiction to determine the claim.

31 § 6. Subdivision (a) of section 1803 of the uniform justice court act,  
32 as amended by chapter 309 of the laws of 1996, is amended to read as  
33 follows:

34 (a) Small claims shall be commenced upon the payment by the claimant  
35 of a filing fee of ten dollars for claims in the amount of one thousand  
36 dollars or less and fifteen dollars for claims in the amount of more  
37 than one thousand dollars, without the service of a summons and, except  
38 by special order of the court, without the service of any pleading other  
39 than a statement of his cause of action by the claimant or someone in  
40 his behalf to the clerk, who shall reduce the same to a concise, written  
41 form and record it in a filing system maintained especially for such  
42 purpose. Such procedure shall provide for the sending of notice of such  
43 claim by ordinary first class mail and certified mail with return  
44 receipt requested to the party complained against (1) at his residence,  
45 if he resides within the county and his residence is known to the claim-  
46 ant, ~~(2)~~ (2) at his office or place of regular employment within the  
47 municipality if he does not reside within the county or his residence  
48 within the county is not known to the claimant, or (3) where claimant is  
49 or was a tenant or lessee of real property owned by the defendant and  
50 the claim relates to such tenancy or lease and the notice of claim  
51 cannot be sent under paragraph one or two of this subdivision, at any  
52 place in the county or an adjoining county where claimant may mail or  
53 otherwise deliver rent. If, after the expiration of twenty-one days,  
54 such ordinary first class mailing has not been returned as undelivera-  
55 ble, the party complained against shall be presumed to have received  
56 notice of such claim. Such notice shall include a clear description of

1 the procedure for filing a counterclaim, pursuant to subdivision (c) of  
2 this section.

3 Such procedure shall further provide for an early hearing upon and  
4 determination of such claim. No filing fee, however, shall be demanded  
5 or received on small claims of employees who shall comply with section  
6 nineteen hundred twelve of this act which is hereby made applicable,  
7 except that necessary mailing costs shall be paid.

8 § 7. Section 1801 of the New York city civil court act, as amended by  
9 chapter 664 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

10 § 1801. Small claims defined. The term "small claim" or "small claims"  
11 as used in this act shall mean and include any cause of action for money  
12 only not in excess of ten thousand dollars exclusive of interest and  
13 costs, or any action commenced by a party aggrieved by an arbitration  
14 award rendered pursuant to part 137 of the rules of the chief adminis-  
15 trator of the courts (22 NYCRR Part 137) in which the amount in dispute  
16 does not exceed ten thousand dollars, provided that the defendant either  
17 resides, or has an office for the transaction of business or a regular  
18 employment[~~r~~] within the city of New York, or where claimant is a tenant  
19 or lessee of real property owned by the defendant and the claim relates  
20 to such tenancy or lease, and such real property is situated within the  
21 city of New York.

22 § 8. Subdivision (a) of section 1803 of the New York city civil court  
23 act, as amended by section 34 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws of  
24 2003, is amended to read as follows:

25 (a) Small claims shall be commenced upon the payment by the claimant  
26 of a filing fee of fifteen dollars for claims in the amount of one thou-  
27 sand dollars or less and twenty dollars for claims in the amount of more  
28 than one thousand dollars, without the service of a summons and, except  
29 by special order of the court, without the service of any pleading other  
30 than a statement of his cause of action by the claimant or someone in  
31 his behalf to the clerk, who shall reduce the same to a concise, written  
32 form and record it in a docket kept especially for such purpose. Such  
33 procedure shall provide for the sending of notice of such claim by ordi-  
34 nary first class mail and certified mail with return receipt requested  
35 to the party complained against (1) at his residence, if he resides  
36 within the city of New York, and his residence is known to the claimant,  
37 [~~or~~] (2) at his office or place of regular employment within the city of  
38 New York if he does not reside therein or his residence within the city  
39 of New York is not known to the claimant, or (3) where claimant is or  
40 was a tenant or lessee of real property owned by the defendant and the  
41 claim relates to such tenancy or lease and the notice of claim cannot be  
42 sent under paragraph one or two of this subdivision, at any place in the  
43 state where plaintiff may mail or otherwise deliver rent. If, after the  
44 expiration of twenty-one days, such ordinary first class mailing has not  
45 been returned as undeliverable, the party complained against shall be  
46 presumed to have received notice of such claim. Such notice shall  
47 include a clear description of the procedure for filing a counterclaim,  
48 pursuant to subdivision (c) of this section.

49 Such procedure shall further provide for an early hearing upon and  
50 determination of such claim. No filing fee, however, shall be demanded  
51 or received on small claims of employees who shall comply with § 1912  
52 (a) of this act which is hereby made applicable, except that necessary  
53 mailing costs shall be paid.

54 § 9. This act shall take effect on the first of September next  
55 succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.