§ 1802. Parts for the determination of small claims established.

The chief administrator shall assign the times and places for holding, and the judges who shall hold, one or more parts of the court for the hearing of small claims as herein defined, and the rules may regulate the practice and procedure controlling the determination of such claims and prescribe and furnish the forms for instituting the same. There shall be at least one evening session of each part every month for the hearing of small claims, provided however, that the chief administrator may provide for exemption from this requirement where there exists no demonstrated need for evening sessions. Such practice, procedure and forms shall differ from the practice, procedure and forms used in the court for other than small claims, notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary. They shall constitute a simple, informal and inexpensive procedure for the prompt determination of such claims in accordance with the rules and principles of substantive law. The procedure established pursuant to this article shall not be exclusive of but shall be alternative to the procedure now or hereafter established with respect to actions commenced in the court by the service of a summons. No rule to be enacted pursuant to this article shall dispense with or interfere with the taking of stenographic minutes of any hearing of any small claim hereunder, except that in cities with a population of fifty thousand or less hearings may be recorded mechanically.