



Big Changes to Small Claims

The politicians in Albany got this right! Until now, the maximum a person could recover in New York City Small Claims Court was \$5,000.00. However, effective immediately, the new ceiling is \$10,000.00. As explained in the Bill's Legislative History:

The current statutory cap for small claims [of \$5,000] does not reflect the modern day cost of many disputes, particularly in New York City, and bars many people seeking redress in small claims court who cannot otherwise afford counsel. This proposal is limited to New York City only. The jurisdictional limit for small claims would remain \$5,000 for City Courts outside of New York City, and \$3,000 for Town and Village Courts.

MILLER LAW OFFICES welcomes this overdue change. The Small Claims Court has been called the "people's court" since well before the reality TV series by the same name. In this user-friendly system, individual people and businesses come before a Judge and resolve relatively small disputes quickly and efficiently, without necessarily retaining a lawyer. The Small Claims Court dispenses with the pesky rules and procedures that are necessary with complex litigation, cases with higher monetary of value, and/or cases where more than money is at issue. As a result, Small Claims Court is far less expensive and time consuming than litigating in higher courts. Thus, the doubling of the jurisdictional amount will allow many more people access to this streamlined and simplified venue.

Litigation is nobody's idea of fun, but it is an important tool to protect the rights of an aggrieved party. MILLER LAW OFFICES explains to our clients and prospective clients at the outset that the legal system is often, unfortunately, saddled with a trifecta of negative experiences. Cases are:

1. Expensive,
2. Time consuming, and
3. The results are unpredictable and uncertain.

We work with our clients in cases - big and small - to navigate through the rocky terrain. We strive to be cost effective and time conscious. Still, legal actions are fraught with uncertain outcomes. As the philosopher Meatloaf sang, "*two out of three ain't bad*".