

A Bill for an Act Relating to the Small Claims Division of the District Court.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 633-27, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) All district courts, except as otherwise provided, shall exercise jurisdiction conferred by this chapter, and while sitting in the exercise of that jurisdiction, shall be known and referred to as the small claims division of the district court; provided that the jurisdiction of the court when sitting as a small claims division of the district court shall be confined to:

- (1) Cases for the recovery of money only where the amount claimed does not exceed [\$2,500] \$3,500 exclusive of interest and costs, except as provided by section 633-30;
- (2) Cases involving disagreement between landlord and tenant about the security deposit in a residential landlord-tenant relationship; and
- (3) Cases for the return of leased or rented personal property worth [\$1,500] \$3,500 or less where the amount claimed owed for that lease or rental does not exceed [\$2,500] \$3,500 exclusive of interest and costs.

This chapter shall not abridge or affect the jurisdiction of the district courts under paragraphs (1) and (3) to determine cases under the ordinary procedures of the court, it being optional with the plaintiff in the cases to elect the procedure of the small claims division of the district court or the ordinary procedures, as provided by rule of court. No case filed in the small claims division after December 31, 1991, shall be removed from the small claims division to be heard under the ordinary procedures of the district court unless the removal is agreed to by the plaintiff. In cases arising under paragraph (2) the jurisdiction of the small claims division of the district court shall be exclusive. This subsection shall not abrogate nor supersede sections 604-5, 633-30, and 633-31.”

SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 17, 1992.)